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T H E
C O N T E N T S
O F T H E
S E C O N D V O L U M E.

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E R R A T A.

PAge 43, Line 42, *after* Peace of Europe, *add*, which was agreed to. Page 240, *in the Side-Note*, *for*, the Affair of the Charitable Corporation, *read*, the Affair of Lord Derwentwater's Estate. Page 279, *in the Side-Note*, *after*, America, *read*, be imported into Ireland, but, &c. Page 309, *for*, July, *read* February.





SPEECHES

AND

DEBATES

IN THE

House of Commons,

DURING

The Sixth and Last Session of the Sixth
Parliament of *Great-Britain*.



PON the Death of his Majesty King
GEORGE I, the Parliament, though
prorogued to the 27th of June, met on the
15th, being the very next Day after the
Arrival of the Express with the News ; in
pursuance of the Act of the 4th and 5th of
Queen Anne, Chap. 8, by which it is en-

The Parliament
meet June 27, 1727,
on Occasion of the
Death of King
George I, and the
Accession of King
George II.

acted as follows, viz. ‘ That this present Parliament, or any
‘ other Parliament hereafter summoned by her Majesty, her
‘ Heirs and Successors, shall not be determined or dissolved by
‘ the Death or Demise of her said Majesty, or of her Heirs
‘ and Successors ; but such Parliament shall continue, and im-

Anno 1. Geo. II.
1727.

‘mediately meet, sit, and act, notwithstanding such Death or Demise, during the Time of six Months, unless the same shall be sooner prorogued, or dissolved, by such Person who shall be next Heir to the Crown of this Realm in Succession.’ The Parliament being met accordingly was prorogued by Commission from his Majesty King George the Second, till the 27th of June, on which Day his Majesty came to the House of Peers, and being seated on the Throne with the usual Solemnity, and the Commons being sent for and attending, his Majesty made the following Speech to both Houses.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

The Speech of
King George II.
to the Parliament,
at his Accession to
the Crown.

“ I Am persuaded that you all share with me in my Grief and Affliction for the Death of my late Royal Father, which, as it brings upon me the immediate Care and Weight of the Government, adds very much to my Concern, lest I should not be as successful in my Endeavours, as I am, above all Things, desirous to make you a great and happy People.

“ I heartily wish, that this first solemn Declaration of my Mind in Parliament, could sufficiently express the Sentiments of my Heart, and give you a perfect and just Sense of my fixed Resolution, by all possible Means, to merit the Love and Affection of my People, which I shall always look upon as the best Support and Security of my Crown.

“ And as the Religion, Liberty, Property, and a due Execution of the Laws, are the most valuable Blessings of a free People, and the peculiar Privileges of this Nation, it shall be my constant Care to preserve the Constitution of this Kingdom, as it is now happily established in Church and State, inviolable in all its Parts; and to secure to all my Subjects the full Enjoyment of their Religious and Civil Rights.

“ I see with great Pleasure the happy Effects of that Vigour and Resolution, which was exerted in the last Session of Parliament, for the Defence of the Rights and Possessions of this Nation, and for maintaining the Tranquility and Balance of Power in Europe. The strict Union and Harmony, which has hitherto subsisted among the Allies of the Treaty of Hanover, has chiefly contributed to the near Prospect of a General Peace; I have therefore given all my Allies the strongest Assurances of pursuing the same Measures, and of making good the Engagements entered into by the Crown of Great Britain.

“ The Cheerfulness with which the Supplies necessary for carrying on this great Work were raised, making it but just that the publick Expence should be lessened, as soon

“ as

“ as the Circumstances of Affairs will permit ; I have already given Orders for sending back some of the Regiments brought from Ireland, and will proceed to reduce my Forces, both by Sea and Land, as soon as it can be done without Prejudice to the common Cause, and consistent with the Interest of my Kingdom.

Anno 1. Geo. II.
1727.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

“ You know very well, that the Grant of the greatest Part of the Civil List Revenues is now determined, and that it is necessary for you to make a new Provision for the Support of me and my Family. I am confident it is needless for me, in any particular Manner, to recommend to your Care the Consideration of what so nearly and personally concerns me ; and I am persuaded, that the Experience of past Times, and a due Regard to the Honour and Dignity of the Crown, will prevail upon you to give me this first Proof of your Zeal and Affection, in a Manner answerable to the Necessities of my Government.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ I recommend it to you to give all possible Dispatch to such Business as shall necessarily be brought before you ; the Season of the Year, and the Circumstances of Time requiring your Presence in the Country, and making it improper to carry this Session into any great Length.”

The Commons being return'd to their House, Mr Speaker reported his Majesty's Speech to both Houses. Hereupon Sir Paul Methuen mov'd, 'That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, to condole upon the Death of his late Royal Father ; to congratulate his Majesty on his happy Accession to the Throne ; and to return his Majesty the Thanks of this House for his most gracious Speech.' This Motion being seconded by Sir Robert Walpole, and voted *Nem. Con.* a Committee was appointed to draw up an Address upon the said Resolution. Sir Robert Walpole, being one of the said Committee, immediately drew up an Address ; which, on the 29th, was reported, and unanimously agreed to.

Sir P. Methuen moves for an Address of Condolence, Congratulation, and Thanks.

June 29. A Motion being made, that a Supply be granted to his Majesty, for the better Support of his Majesty's Household, and of the Honour and Dignity of the Crown ; it was unanimously resolved to consider of that Motion the next Day in a Grand Committee ; which was done accordingly ; and therein it was resolv'd, *Nem. Con.* to grant such a Supply to his Majesty.

The Commons resolve to grant a Supply, for the Support of the King's Household.

June 30. The Commons presented their Address to his Majesty as follows.

Anno r. Geo. II.

1727.

The Address

Most Gracious Sovereign,

‘ **WE** your Majesty’s most dutiful and loyal Subjects,
 ‘ the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament as-
 ‘ sembled, from a grateful Sense and Remembrance of the
 ‘ many Blessings we enjoyed under the Government of our
 ‘ late most Gracious Sovereign, beg Leave, in the most duti-
 ‘ ful Manner, to condole with your Majesty upon the Death
 ‘ of your late Royal Father; a Loss to this Nation which
 ‘ your Majesty alone could possibly repair.

‘ Your immediate Succession banished all our Grief; and
 ‘ the uninterrupted Continuance of the Blessings we had long
 ‘ enjoyed obliges us, with Duty and Gratitude, to acknow-
 ‘ ledge the just Sense we have of our present and future Hap-
 ‘ piness; and to beseech your Majesty to accept the sincere
 ‘ Congratulations of your faithful Commons, upon your Ma-
 ‘ jesty’s happy Accession to the Throne of your Royal An-
 ‘ cestors.

‘ Your Majesty’s most Gracious Speech from the Throne
 ‘ requires a more than ordinary Return of Duty and Thank-
 ‘ fulness, for that tender and paternal Care, which you have
 ‘ been pleased to express for our Religion, Laws, and Liber-
 ‘ ties, and for those ample Assurances your Majesty has given
 ‘ us, inviolably to preserve the Constitution of these King-
 ‘ doms, as it is now happily established in Church and
 ‘ State; and to secure to all your Subjects the full Enjoy-
 ‘ ment of their Religious and Civil Rights: And as these
 ‘ Blessings are the most valuable and dear to a free People,
 ‘ and the peculiar Privileges of this Nation; we cannot
 ‘ enough admire your Majesty’s Goodness, and express our
 ‘ Satisfaction, in this solemn Declaration of your Majesty’s
 ‘ Resolution, to make the Good of your People your chief
 ‘ and constant Care.

‘ We congratulate your Majesty upon the Preliminary
 ‘ Articles being signed; and we see, with great Pleasure, the
 ‘ Beginning of your Majesty’s Reign attended with the hap-
 ‘ py Presages of a General Peace. The early Assurances
 ‘ given by your Majesty to your Allies, of pursuing the same
 ‘ Measures as your late Royal Father had taken, and of
 ‘ making good the several Engagements entered into by the
 ‘ Crown of Great Britain; as they strengthen and cement
 ‘ that strict Union and Harmony which has hitherto subsisted
 ‘ among the Allies of the Treaty of Hanover, so they confirm
 ‘ to us the Hopes and near Prospect of a general Tranquili-
 ‘ ty, upon Terms honourable, safe, and advantageous to your
 ‘ Majesty, and all your Allies.

‘ The Regard and Concern which we had, and always
 ‘ shall have, for the Defence of the Rights and Possessions
 ‘ of this Nation, for vindicating the Honour of our Sovereign,
 ‘ and

‘ and for maintaining the due Balance of Power in Europe,
 ‘ engaged us with Chearfulness, during the last Session of
 ‘ Parliament, to grant the Supplies necessary for the carrying
 ‘ on this great Work. And no greater Encouragement can
 ‘ possibly be given to us, than to see your Majesty so early
 ‘ beginning to lessen the publick Expences, and resolving
 ‘ to reduce your Forces both by Sea and Land, as soon as it
 ‘ can be done without Prejudice to the Common Cause, and
 ‘ consistent with the Interest and Safety of this Nation.

ANNO. I. Geo. M.

1727.

‘ These many and great Instances of your Majesty’s Good-
 ‘ ness and Concern for the Happiness and Welfare of your
 ‘ People call upon us for the highest Returns of Duty, Zeal,
 ‘ and Affection to your Majesty’s Person and Government :
 ‘ And as we are fully convinced that our own Interest and
 ‘ Preservation are inseparable from your Majesty’s, we beg
 ‘ Leave to assure your Majesty, that we will, with our Lives
 ‘ and Fortunes, maintain and support your Majesty’s un-
 ‘ doubted Right and Title to the Imperial Crown of this
 ‘ Realm, and all other your Majesty’s Dominions, against
 ‘ all Attempts whatsoever.

‘ And when we reflect on your Majesty’s Royal Virtues,
 ‘ which promise us all the Blessings that can flow from a
 ‘ Mind truly Great; when we consider the distinguished
 ‘ Character of the Queen, your Royal Consort, and the ad-
 ‘ ditional Happiness that descends to your People from her
 ‘ many Princely Qualities, and remember your numerous and
 ‘ hopeful Issue, the lasting Pledge and Security of our happy
 ‘ Establishment; that your Majesty’s Crown may sit with
 ‘ Ease and Glory on your Head, we think ourselves indispen-
 ‘ sibly obliged to assure your Majesty, that we will provide
 ‘ such a Revenue for the Occasions of your Majesty’s Civil
 ‘ Government, as may be sufficient to support the Honour
 ‘ and Dignity of the Crown in its proper and full Lustre.

To this Address the King return’d the following Answer.

Gentlemen,

“ **I** Return you my Thanks for your dutiful and loyal Ad-
 “ drefs. The Resolutions of the Commons of Great
 “ Britain are, every where, so highly regarded, that I can-
 “ not but receive, with the greatest Satisfaction, this unani-
 “ mous Declaration of your Fidelity, Zeal, and Affection;
 “ and I will endeavour, by a steady Care and Concern for
 “ the Interest and Welfare of my People, to answer the Ex-
 “ pectation you have conceived of my Government.

The King’s An-
 swer thereto.

July 1. Mr Farrer reported the Resolution of the Grand
 Committee, for granting a Supply to his Majesty, for the
 better

Anno 1. Geo. II.
1727.

Sir R. Walpole's
Motion for settling
on the King the
entire Revenues
of the Civil List.

better Support of his Majesty's Household, and of the Honour and Dignity of the Crown, which was agreed to, *Nem. Con.*

July 3. The Commons, in a Committee of the whole House, consider'd of the Supply granted to his Majesty, and Sir Robert Walpole represent'd, 'That the annual Sum of 700,000 l. granted to and settled on the late King, for the Support of his Household and of the Honour and Dignity of the Crown, falling short every Year, they had been obliged to make it up another Way; and that his present Majesty's necessary Expences being like to increase, by reason of the Largeness of his Family, and of settling a Household for his Royal Consort, he therefore moved, 'That the entire Revenues of the Civil List, which produced about 100,000 l. *per Annum*, above the said yearly Sum of 700,000 l. might be settled on his Majesty during his Life.' This Motion being seconded, Mr Shippen stood up and spoke as follows.

Mr Speaker,

'I agree with the honourable Member who spoke first, [*Sir Robert Walpole*] That on his Majesty's happy Accession to the Throne, there ought to be no other Contention amongst us, than who should most contribute to his Service, than who should express their Duty and Loyalty in the most respectful and the most extensive Manner. But then I hope he will agree with me, that this is to be done with some Regard to those we represent: That this is to be done, consistent with the Trust reposed in us; consistent with that Frugality which this House is bound to use, whenever the Crown is pleased to call upon it, to exercise its great Power of giving Money.

'Now, notwithstanding what has been urged, I think, we shall so far depart from this Rule of Frugality, as we exceed the Revenue granted to his late Majesty, whether that Exceeding shall amount yearly to 93,000 l. as computed at the highest by that honourable Member, or to above 130,000 l. as I have seen it more truly computed by another. For I remember very well, that the yearly Sum of 700,000 l. tho' now thought too little, was not obtain'd for his late Majesty, without a long and solemn Debate; [*See Vol. I. p. 21.*] and it was allow'd by every one that contended for it, to be an ample Royal Revenue. Nor was it ask'd inconsiderately, and on a sudden; it was ask'd on mature Deliberation, after the Queen's Civil List Branches were found deficient; it was ask'd after many Computations had been made of every Charge requisite to support the Honour and Dignity of the Crown, and to maintain the present Royal Family; It was ask'd, after duly weighing what Provision would be sufficient to answer all the ordinary and extraordinary Occasions of the Civil Government; what would be sufficient to answer all proper Augmentations of Salaries, all reasonable

Mr Shippen's
Speech on that
Occasion.

sonable and charitable Pensions, all secret Services at Home and Abroad, necessary to carry on a just and wise Administration: It was ask'd by that honourable Member himself and others, who were entering into great Employments, who were going to taste of the Royal Bounty, and who therefore could not possibly be suspected to have any Design of cramping his Majesty, by a too contracted and narrow Revenue.

'Nor does the late Alteration in the Royal Family call for any Increase of Expence. For if the Establishment for the Queen should be enlarged, whose distinguished Character and many Princely Virtues, taken Notice of in your Address, intitle her to all Degrees of Grandeur, which any former Queen Consort ever enjoy'd; I say, if her Majesty's Establishment should be enlarg'd, I presume the Establishment for Prince Frederick will be much inferior to that settled on his present Majesty when Prince of Wales. Besides, our ardent Wishes for his Majesty's constant Residence in these Kingdoms, and his Royal Intentions of making us a great and happy People, give us Hopes, that many personal, many particular Expences in the late Reign, especially those for frequent Journeys to Hanover, will be discontinu'd, and entirely cease.

'Nor is it any Objection to the Reasoning of that Time, when the 700,000 l. was granted to the late King, or to the Computations then made, that this Sum is said to have been found by the Experience of past Times, to be not answerable to the Necessities of the Civil Government.

'For this Experience could not be found in the Queen's Reign, because her Civil List Branches seldom amounted to 600,000 l. commonly to about 550,000 l. and sometimes to very little above 500,000 l. as appears by Accounts formerly laid before this House; and I will not suppose those Accounts which were brought from the Treasury to be otherwise than true, in regard to my honourable Friend—I ask Pardon, I should have said, the honourable Member, for there is no Friendship betwixt us. But he must give me Leave to observe, That when he asserts her Civil List Branches amounted to above 700,000 l. yearly, he can only mean the gross, and not the neat Produce, which is a very uncandid and fallacious Way of Arguing.

'Tho' her Revenues were so low, yet she called upon her Parliament but once in a Reign of above thirteen Years, to pay the Debts contracted in her Civil Government; and it is a Justice due to the Memory of that excellent Princess, to remind Gentlemen of the unparalell'd Instances of her Piety and Generosity, which occasion'd those Debts. She gave the First Fruits and Tenths, arising now, as the honourable Member, who made this Motion, says, to 19,000 l. a Year, for the Augmentation of the Maintenance of the Poor Clergy: She

gave

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gave 5000 l. a Year out of the Post-Office to the Duke of Marlborough: She suffer'd 700 l. a Week to be likewise charged on the Post-Office for the publick Service, and by that Concession lost a vast Sum, the additional Duty then producing only 8000 l. a Year: She gave several hundred thousand Pounds for building the Castle of Blenheim: She allow'd Prince Charles of Denmark 4000 l. a Year: She sustain'd great Losses by the Tin Contract: She supported the poor Palatines: She gave 100,000 l. to the Uses of the War. These, with many other Royal Bounties which escape my present Remembrance, were the Reasons that brought her under a Necessity of asking for 500,000 l. But she was so sensible of the Inconvenience, and so determin'd never to apply to her Parliament again in the like Manner, that she order'd a considerable Reduction to be made of her Civil Government Expences. I have seen a Scheme of this Reduction, as it was actually settled a little before her Death, and intended to commence the Lady-Day following. 'Twould be tedious to go through all the particular Articles of it, and I will only name three or four. The Cofferer's-Office Payments were reduc'd from 85,000 l. to 75,000 l. The Allowances for Foreign Ministers, from 75,000 l. to 30,000 l. Pensions and Bounties from upwards of 87,490 l. to 60,000 l. Secret Services from 27,000 l. to 20,000 l. a Sum surprizingly small, when compar'd with the late Disbursements on that Head. In short, the whole yearly Expences were designed to be reduc'd to 459,941 l. and that would have been done without Eclipsing the Glory of the Crown, which, some Gentlemen so roundly affirm, cannot now be maintain'd under almost a double Appointment.

From hence it appears plainly, that this Argument of the Experience of past Times can have no Reference to the Queen's Reign. It must therefore be apply'd, tho' put in the Plural Number, to the late Administration only; and I confess, if the same Management was to be continu'd, if the same Ministers were to be again employ'd, a Million a Year would not be sufficient to carry on the exorbitant Expences, so often, and so justly complain'd of in this House. For it is notorious, it is fresh in all our Memories, that besides the yearly 700,000 l. there have been many occasional Taxes, many excessive Sums rais'd, and they have been all sunk in that bottomless Gulf of Secret Service. First, the memorable 250,000 l. was rais'd, in Defiance of the ancient Parliamentary Methods, to secure us from the Apprehensions of a Swedish Invasion, [See VOL. I. p. 116] Then the two Insurance-Offices were erected in as irregular a Manner, by a Bill brought into this House, at the latter End of a Session, and after the Committee of Supply had been closed, upon the honourable

honourable Member's Return into Power ; and those Bubbles paid near 300,000 l. for their Charters ; [See VOL. I. p. 215.] Then a new Scene of Affairs opening in Sweden chang'd our Enmity into an Alliance, and there was a Subsidy of 72,000 l. implicitly granted to make good some secret Bargain and Engagement with that Crown ; [See VOL. I. p. 253.] At the same Time near 24,000 l. were given for burning two Merchant-Ships arrived from infected Places ; [See VOL. I. p. 255.] but tho' the Goods, as well as the Ships were paid for by this House, that they might, without Injury to the Owners, be destroy'd for the publick Safety, yet most of them were privately convey'd into Counties adjacent to the Port where the Ships lay, and sold there. Then soon after a Sum of 500,000 l. was demanded and granted for the Payment of the Civil List Debts ; on which Occasion his late Majesty declared in his Message, ' That He was resolved ' to cause a Retrenchment to be made of his Expences for the ' future : ' [See VOL. I. p. 257.] But notwithstanding that Resolution, in less than four Years, the Necessities of the Government having render'd the promised Retrenchment impracticable, there was a new Demand, and a new Grant of 500,000 l. more, to discharge new Incumbrances, [See VOL. I. p. 339.] I might mention too the Spanish Ships which were taken in the famous Mediterranean Sea-fight, and, as we have Reason to believe, sold for a considerable Sum of Money. Nor is it possible to forget the 125,000 l. [See VOL. I. p. 385.] which we could only be told, the last Session, in a general unexplain'd Article, was secretly dispos'd of, for the publick Utility, for the Conservation of the Peace of Europe, and for the Security of the Commerce and Navigation of Great Britain.

' After all these and other extraordinary Supplies, I am inform'd there yet remains a Debt in the Civil Government of above 600,000 l. If so, surely there must have been a most egregious Neglect of Duty, to say no worse ; there must have been a strange Spirit of Extravagance somewhere, or such immense Sums could never have been so soon, so insensibly, squander'd away. And it is amazing that this Extravagance should happen under the Conduct of Persons pretending to surpass all their Predecessors, in the Knowledge and Care of the Publick Revenue : But we are not to wonder that the World has been free in its Censures, since none of these Sums have been accounted for, since they have been employ'd in Services not fit to be own'd. None but those who were in the Secret, and who had the Disposal of them, can refute the Reflections that are made without Doors, not only on the Ministry, but even on both Houses of Parliament,——I must say no more——But I heartily wish, that Time, the great Discoverer of hidden

Truths and concealed Iniquities, may produce a List of all such, if any such there were, who have been perverted from their publick Duty by private Pensions; who have been the hired Slaves, and the corrupt Instruments of a profuse and vain-glorious Administration. If there have been none such, then the whole Weight, then the whole Guilt of the late Mismanagement lies on the Ministers themselves.

‘ But it seems to be Matter of universal Joy to the Nation, that the Case is like to be alter’d : We hope we are arrived at a Day of better OEconomy : We hope such Practices will be so far from being imitated, that they will be detested and abhorr’d ; nor can any one entertain the least Doubt of this, when he considers that a Prince is ascending the Throne, who will choose a knowing, faithful, and frugal Ministry ; who will not permit his Domestick or Foreign Affairs to be negotiated by Bribery and Corruption, for want of Sufficiency and Skill in Politicks ; whose Wisdom will enable him, and whose Goodness will incline him, not only to inspect the Management of the Civil List Branches, but in Justice to his Parliaments, and in Compassion to his People, to direct and require a due and exact Disposition of all the other publick Funds, according to their respective Appropriations.

‘ Now, in Consequence of this most just Notion of his Majesty’s Frugality, which, amongst other his innumerable Virtues, endears him so much to his Subjects, I hope I may, without Offence, propose the Addition of some Words to your Question, that may restrain it to 700,000 l : And in this I as much consult the Service of his Majesty, and the Honour and Dignity of the Crown, as those who are for granting the Funds without any Restriction. For, in my humble Opinion, the Voting a greater Sum than was settled on his late Majesty, is only voting an Indemnity, is voting at least in Favour of Ministers whose Conduct, as I have already hinted, if laid before you, and duly examin’d, would perhaps rather deserve your Censure than Approbation.

‘ Besides, the Surplus of these Branches is appropriated to the Sinking Fund ; and, that, I thought had been a Sacred Depositum, reserved for the gradual Discharge of the National Debt : I thought it would have been look’d upon as a Sort of Sacrilege, to have diverted the least Part of it, on any Pretence whatsoever, from its original Uses ; and it is as surprizing to me, that the honourable Person should be for destroying his own Darling Project, and that he should be for pulling down the boasted Monument of his Glory ; as it may be to others, that I am for supporting any Scheme of his, which might have transmitted his Name with Advantage to Posterity.

‘ If his Majesty was rightly appriz’d of these Circumstances, he would doubtless rather be content with a clear annual Revenue of 700,000 l. than suffer his first Demand of Money, by any precipitate Proof of our Zeal, to carry the least Appearance of being burthensome to his People, who have long labour’d under the Pressure of grievous and exorbitant Taxes ; for he has been graciously pleased to signify from the Throne his fix’d Resolution, [See p. 2.] “ By all possible Means to merit their Love and Affection, which he shall always look upon as the best Support and Security of his Crown.”

‘ I will detain you, Sir, no longer, but desire you would conclude your Question with these Words,

‘ In like Manner as they were granted and continu’d to his late Majesty, which make up the clear yearly Sum of 700,000 l.’

To this Speech no Reply was made, but the Question being put, Sir Robert Walpole’s Motion was agreed to without any farther Opposition.

July 4. The Resolution of the Committee, in Pursuance of the above Motion, was reported and agreed to, and a Bill order’d to be brought in thereupon.

July 5. The Bill, *For the better Support of his Majesty’s Household, &c.* was presented to the House, read the first Time, and order’d to be read a second Time.

July 6. The said Bill was read the second Time, and committed to a Grand Committee ; and then Sir Paul Methuen delivered to the House a Message, sign’d by his Majesty, which was read, as follows, viz.

GEORGE R.

“ HIS Majesty considering that the Provision made for the Queen his Consort, in Case she should survive his Majesty, is very insufficient to support her Royal Dignity ; and that his Majesty is restrained, by the Laws now in being, from increasing the same, thinks it necessary to recommend the making farther Provision for the Queen to your Consideration.”

King’s Message for settling a Dowry on the Queen.

Hereupon it was unanimously resolv’d to take the said Message into Consideration the next Day, in a Committee of the whole House.

July 7. The Commons, in a Grand Committee, took into Consideration his Majesty’s Message, and resolv’d, I. That a Provision be made for the Queen, in Case she shall survive his Majesty, of 100,000 l. *per Annum* during her Life, with his Majesty’s Palace of Somerset-House, and Richmond Old-Park. II. That his Majesty be enabled to charge the said

100,000 l. *per Annum*, voted for that Purpose.

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100,000*l. per Annum* on all, or any of the Duties or Revenues, settled for the better Support of his Majesty's Household, and the Honour and Dignity of the Crown, which shall subsist after his Majesty's Demise.

July 8. Mr Fairer reported the preceding Day's Resolutions for a Provision for her Majesty, which being agreed to, *Nem. Con.* a Bill was order'd to be brought in, pursuant to the said Resolutions.

July 10. The Civil List Bill was read the third Time, passed, and sent up to the Lords; then Sir Robert Walpole presented to the House a Bill, *To enable his Majesty to settle a Revenue for supporting the Royal Dignity of the Queen, &c.* which was read the first Time, and unanimously order'd to be read a second Time.

July 11. The said Bill was read a second Time, and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

July 14. The said Bill was read the third Time, passed, and sent up to the Lords.

July 17. The King went to the House of Peers, with the usual Solemnity, and the Commons attending, his Majesty gave the Royal Assent to an Act, *For the better Support of his Majesty's Household, and of the Honour and Dignity of the Crown of Great Britain*; also to an Act, *For enabling his Majesty to settle a Revenue for supporting the Royal Dignity of the Queen, in Case she shall survive his Majesty*; and to three other Bills.

After which his Majesty made the following Speech to both Houses :

My Lords and Gentlemen,

King's Speech at
putting an End to
the Parliament.

" I Cannot but express the greatest Satisfaction in the convincing Proofs you have given me, in this Session, of your Duty and Affection to my Person, and Zeal for my Government.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

" I must particularly thank you for your Unanimity and Dispatch in granting me the Revenues necessary for the Support of my Family, and the Occasions of my Civil Government; which you have done in a Manner so very agreeable, and with such a due Regard to the Honour and Dignity of the Crown, that if any Thing could add to my own Inclinations of making the Happiness of my Subjects my principal Care and Study, this Instance of your particular Confidence in me would engage me more strongly to make Use of the Power, which you have given me of doing Good, in promoting the Honour and Interest of my People.

" The

“ The ample Provision you have made for the Queen is
 “ another Instance of your Regard for me, which I am
 “ confident She will very well deserve, and I shall always
 “ acknowledge.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ It is a great Happiness to me to see the Nation in so
 “ prosperous and flourishing a Condition, at the highest Pitch
 “ of Glory and Reputation, of great Weight in holding the
 “ Balance of Europe, defending themselves in their just Pri-
 “ vileges and Possessions, and vindicating the Honour of the
 “ Crown of Great Britain.

“ At Home I find, among my Protestant Subjects, such
 “ mutual Charity and Forbearance diffused throughout the
 “ Kingdom, that the National Church repines not at the
 “ Indulgence given to scrupulous Consciences; and those, that
 “ receive the Benefits of the Toleration, envy not the Esta-
 “ blish’d Church the Rights and Privileges which they by
 “ Law enjoy.

“ From these happy Causes and favourable Conjunctions
 “ has flowed that general Tranquility, that Rise of Publick
 “ Credit, and that Improvement of Trade and Commerce,
 “ which have greatly increased our Wealth and Power,
 “ and given us that Respect and Influence Abroad, which
 “ has so much advanced the Glory and Happiness of this
 “ Nation.

“ But all these Blessings, great and valuable as they are,
 “ had not been secured and transmitted to us, without your
 “ having carefully avoided all Occasions of Strife and Divi-
 “ sion; without a strict Regard to Publick Faith, a constant
 “ Care and Attention towards discharging the National
 “ Debt, and without that singular Steadiness and Resolution,
 “ which this Parliament has shewed upon all proper and ne-
 “ cessary Occasions.

“ I can therefore make no doubt, but that your Beha-
 “ viour, and the Temper you have shewn, will sufficiently
 “ recommend this Parliament to the Esteem and good Opi-
 “ nion of their Country; who, from the same Conduct,
 “ and by pursuing the same Measures, may promise them-
 “ selves all future Prosperity.

“ The Expiration of this Parliament now drawing near,
 “ I will give Orders for issuing the Writs for calling and
 “ electing a new Parliament, as soon it can conveniently be
 “ done; and I am persuaded that the general Contest and
 “ Emulation in Expressions of Duty and Affection to me,
 “ which, to my great Satisfaction, I have universally met
 “ with, will be farther demonstrated by the Choice of a
 “ Parliament, zealously affected to our present happy Esta-
 “ blishment in the Protestant Succession; and in Return,
 “ nothing

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“ nothing shall be wanting on my Part, that can contribute
“ towards improving a good Correspondence and Harmony
“ between me and my People, and that can tend to perfect
“ and perpetuate the Happiness of Great Britain. ”

The Parliament
dissolv'd.

Then the Lord Chancellor prorogued the Parliament to the 29th of August ; but on the 7th of the same Month a Proclamation was issued for dissolving this Parliament, and Calling of another.

The End of the last Session of the Sixth Parliament of Great-Britain.



S P E E C H E S

A N D

D E B A T E S

I N T H E

First Session of the FIRST PARLIAMENT

O F

King G E O R G E II.

And Seventh Parliament of *Great-Britain.*

ON the 23d of January, the Parliament being met at Westminster, the King went to the House of Peers, with the usual State and Solemnity; and the Commons being come thither, his Majesty signify'd his Pleasure to them by the Lord High Chancellor, that they should return to their House and choose their Speaker, and present him to his Majesty on the 27th.

The Commons being return'd accordingly, unanimously chose Arthur Onslow, Esq; Knight of the Shire for Surrey, to be their Speaker.

January 27. The King being come again to the House of Peers, and the Commons being sent for up and attending, they presented their Speaker for his Majesty's Approbation, and the King approved their Choice: After which, his Majesty made the following Speech to both Houses, viz.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ **I**T is a great Satisfaction to me, that at my Meeting the First Parliament summoned and convened by my Authority, I am able to give you Hopes of seeing the Publick Peace and Tranquility very soon restored. I very much wished that the first Period of my Reign might have been distinguished, by putting an immediate End to
“ the

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The Parliament
meet.

Mr Onslow chosen
Speaker.

The King's Speech
at the opening of the
First Session.

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“ the Troubles and Disorders of Europe, by a Reduction of
“ some Part of my Forces, a Diminution of Taxes, and
“ all the happy Consequences of an honourable and establish-
“ ed Peace ; to which my Endeavours have in no Manner
“ been wanting, as far as was consistent with maintaining
“ the Possessions, Rights, and Privileges of my Kingdom,
“ and, I promise myself, not without great Probability of
“ Success.

“ I am very sensible of the disagreeable and uneasy Si-
“ tuation in which our Affairs have been for some Time,
“ and have been extremely concerned to see many of the
“ Inconveniencies of a War attending us, without any Op-
“ portunity of resenting the Injuries we sustained, or gain-
“ ing any of those Advantages in Return, which the vigor-
“ ous Prosecution of so just a Cause, and the Success of our
“ Arms, might probably have secured to us.

“ But you are sufficiently apprized, that Preliminary Ar-
“ ticles for a general Pacification were some Time ago signed
“ and accepted, by the contracting Parties on both Sides ;
“ and although the Ratifications of them had been exchanged
“ by me and my Allies, with his Imperial Majesty ; the
“ good Effects, expected from them, were retarded by the
“ Refusal on the Part of Spain, to execute some of the most
“ material Points contained in them ; and by Endeavours to
“ alter and explain some Articles, in such a Manner, as im-
“ mediately affected the Possessions and the just Right of my
“ Kingdoms. I therefore, jointly with my Allies, declined
“ exchanging the Ratifications of the Preliminaries with the
“ Court of Spain ; and rejected all such Propositions, as were
“ detrimental and injurious to my Honour, and the Interest
“ of my People.

“ By these Means, the Negotiations were unavoidably
“ carried into a tedious Length, which I endured with the
“ greater Patience, from an earnest Desire to procure to my
“ Subjects a safe and honourable Peace, and to see the Tran-
“ quillity of Europe preserved and settled upon a solid and
“ lasting Foundation ; during which Time, I received from
“ the most Christian King, and the States General, the
“ greatest Proofs of their Sincerity, and a Renewal of the
“ strongest Assurances imaginable, that they would effectually
“ make good all their Engagements in Support of the Com-
“ mon Cause, and of our mutual Interests : And I am very
“ glad, that I can acquaint you, that our joint Endeavours
“ have had so good an Effect, that by the last Advices from
“ Abroad, I have great Reason to hope, that the Difficul-
“ ties, which have hitherto retarded the Execution of the
“ Preliminaries, and the Opening of the Congress, will soon
“ be entirely removed.

“ However,

“ However, it will in the mean time be absolutely necessary to continue, as our Allies have already resolved to do, the Preparations which have hitherto been our Security, and prevented an open Rupture in Europe ; that we may not at once lose all the Advantages, which our former Expences and Vigour have so nearly procured, by not being in a Condition, if that Necessity should unexpectedly be brought upon us, to vindicate our Honour, and assert our Rights. And you may depend upon it, that my first Care shall be to reduce, from Time to Time, the Expence of the Publick, as often, and as soon as the Interest and Safety of my People will permit it.

“ The Preliminary Articles and such other Treaties and Conventions, as have not yet been communicated to Parliament, and which may, without manifest Prejudice, be exposed to publick View, shall be laid before you.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

“ I have given Orders to the proper Officers to prepare and lay before you Estimates of the Expences for the Service of the current Year ; and you may be assured, that the Supplies which I find myself obliged to demand of you, shall, as certainly as they do exceed my Wishes and Inclinations, be employed solely for the Interest and Security of the Nation. And I make no doubt, but that if any Method can be found out for raising the necessary Supplies, less grievous to my People than another, That will have the Preference in all your Deliberations.

“ I think myself obliged to recommend to you a Consideration of the greatest Importance, and I should look upon it as a great Happiness, if, at the Beginning of my Reign, I could see the Foundation laid of so great and necessary a Work, as the Increase and Encouragement of our Seamen in general ; that they may be invited, rather than compelled by Force and Violence, to enter into the Service of their Country, as often as Occasion shall require it : A Consideration worthy of the Representative of a People great and flourishing in Trade and Navigation.

“ This leads me to mention to you the Case of Greenwich Hospital, that Care may be taken, by some Addition to that Fund, to render comfortable and effectual that charitable Provision for the Support and Maintenance of our Seamen, worn out and become decrepit by Age and Infirmities, in the Service of their Country.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ As I have great Hopes that a general Pacification will be now obtained by a speedy Execution of the Preliminaries, I am satisfied, that nothing will more effectually contribute to, and secure this desirable End, than such an

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“ Unanimity, Zeal, and Dispatch of the publick Business in
“ this Parliament, as may convince the World, that none
“ among you are capable, out of any Views or Considera-
“ tions whatsoever, to with the Distress of their Country ;
“ or to give an Occasion, from the Prospect of Difficulties
“ that may arise and be fomented here at Home, to inter-
“ rupt or disappoint our present promising Expectations : This
“ it is in your Power to defeat, and this I depend upon from
“ your known Zeal and Affection to my Person and Govern-
“ ment, and your hearty Concern for the Interest and Wel-
“ fare of my People.”

Jan. 31. The five Grand Committees for Religion, Grievances, Courts of Justice, Trade, Privileges and Elections, having been appointed, Mr Speaker reported his Majesty's Speech to both Houses ; upon which the Lord * Hervey, Member for Bury, mov'd for an Address of Thanks to his Majesty, which being seconded, a Committee was appointed to draw up an Address to his Majesty upon the said Resolution.

February 1. The Lord Hervey reported the said Address, which was agreed to.

Feb. 2. The same was presented by the whole House to his Majesty, as follows :

Most Gracious Sovereign,

The Commons Ad-
dress of Thanks.

WE your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal Subjects, the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament assembled, beg Leave to return our humblest Thanks for your Majesty's most gracious Speech from the Throne ; and to acknowledge, in the most dutiful and grateful Manner, the tender and affectionate Concern your Majesty has been pleased to express, for the many Inconveniences, that have arisen from the late disagreeable and unsettled State of the Affairs of Europe.

We are sensible of the unwearied and uninterrupted Care with which your Majesty, ever since we have enjoyed the Blessings of your Reign, has laboured to put an End to the Disputes, and restore the Tranquility of Europe ; of the Desire you have had to free your People from all the Burthens occasioned by impending War, and to procure to them all the happy Consequences of a safe, honourable, and established Peace ; and we think it as impossible that any Difficulties should arise, to prevent us feeling the good Effects to be expected from your Prudence, as it is for any Event

‘ Event to make us forget the Marks we have already received of your Affection.

‘ The Firmness your Majesty has shewn in absolutely refusing to admit of any Explanations of Preliminaries, derogatory to the Honour, or prejudicial to the Interest of this Nation, we feel more sensibly ; as we think ’tis equally for your Majesty’s Glory and our Happiness to have it appear to the whole World, that the Care of your People is a Consideration so much superior to every other, in fixing your Majesty’s Resolutions, that not even One so important as the Peace of all Europe could induce you to submit to the Demands of others, or recede from your own in any Point, where our Possessions were invaded, our Interest struck at, or our Privileges disputed.

‘ And since this Stand, which your Majesty, in Justice to yourself and Regard to your People, thought fit to make, has not broke off the Accommodation, but only retarded it for our Advantage ; we beg Leave to congratulate your Majesty upon the near Prospect of that Success in your Negotiations, which cannot more effectually fulfil our Wishes, as the Earnest of our Prosperity, than it answers our Expectations in demonstrating your Wisdom.

‘ But in case your Majesty’s Expectations, of seeing the publick Peace and Tranquility soon restor’d, should still be disappointed ; that your People may no longer continue in that Uncertainty, in which the Policy of others may endeavour to keep us ; and that we may be in a Condition to do ourselves Justice, should that Necessity unexpectedly be brought upon us, we are determin’d, out of Regard to our own Interest, as well as that we shall ever pay to your Majesty’s Honour, most effectually to enable you to do yourself Right, and to assert and to maintain all the Possessions, Advantages, and Privileges of your People.

‘ Whatever Supplies therefore may be wanted for the Service of the current Year, your Commons will, with the utmost Chearfulness and Unanimity grant ; being assured no Aid will ever be demanded by your Majesty of your Subjects, but what you judge absolutely necessary for their own Interest and Security. And as we are determin’d, in whatever Supplies we raise, to have Regard to such Methods as shall be least grievous to your People ; so we have the greatest Satisfaction in thinking we may entirely depend on your Majesty’s Justice and Wisdom, that whatever we do grant, will be constantly apply’d in the Manner that will be most beneficial to them. Neither had we the least Doubt, before we received your Majesty’s most gracious Promise, but that your Majesty, from your paternal Goodness to your People, would, from Time to

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‘ Time, take every Opportunity to make all such Reductions
‘ of the publick Expences, as should be for our present Ease,
‘ without endangering our future Safety.

‘ The Assurances your Majesty has given us of the Sin-
‘ cerity and Steadiness, with which you are satisfy’d all your
‘ Allies are determin’d, in all Events to adhere to their En-
‘ gagements, and espouse the Common Cause, gave us the
‘ greatest Satisfaction; and let the future Dangers and Diffi-
‘ culties that may yet arise, impossible to be foreseen, be
‘ ever so formidable or ever so numerous, we do not imagine
‘ there can be any which your Majesty’s Prudence, Caution,
‘ Abilities and Experience, join’d to the Assistance of your
‘ Parliament, the Firmness of your Allies, and the Bravery
‘ of your People, will not easily dispel.

‘ It is an indispensable Duty of those, who have a just
‘ Sense of the great Importance of the Trade and Naviga-
‘ tion of this Kingdom, to provide proper Encouragements
‘ for our Seamen; and common Justice requires that we
‘ should take a compassionate Care of those, who by Mis-
‘ fortunes in their brave and faithful Services to their Coun-
‘ try, are become equally incapable of continuing those Ser-
‘ vices, or providing for themselves; We beg Leave there-
‘ fore to assure your Majesty, that we will take this Matter
‘ into our Consideration, and on this, as well as every other
‘ Occasion, pay the Deference and Regard due to your Ma-
‘ jesty’s most gracious Recommendation.

‘ If there are any so ill informed of the steady Affection
‘ of your Commons, as vainly to place their Hopes on any
‘ Disputes or Differences that might arise amongst us, we
‘ are determin’d, by a hearty, zealous and general Concur-
‘ rence in all our Deliberations, for your Majesty’s Interest
‘ and the Publick Welfare, effectually to disappoint such ill-
‘ grounded Expectations; and we are satisfy’d we cannot
‘ give better Evidence of our Love to our Country, than by
‘ constant Demonstrations of our Duty to the best of Kings:
‘ And as your Majesty’s Endeavours have been, and, we
‘ are persuad’d, ever will be, to preserve us a free, and
‘ establish us a happy People, so we should think our-
‘ selves undeserving all the Benefits and Blessings of your
‘ Reign, were it possible we could ever be wanting in the
‘ least Point, on our part, to make it as great, happy and
‘ glorious, as that of any of your Royal Predecessors.’

To this his Majesty return’d the following Answer.

Gentlemen,

“ I Give you my Thanks for this very loyal and affectio-
“ nate Address. Such Returns of Duty and Gratitude
“ from my faithful Commons would add, if any Thing pos-
“ sibly

“ fibly could, to my Resolutions of promoting and consulting upon all Occasions the Welfare and Prosperity of my People. The entire Confidence you place in me will engage me more strictly to make Use of the Power and Trust you shall repose in me, for your Interest, and to your Satisfaction; and you shall always find my Readiness to ease and reduce the Expences of the Publick to your Expectations.”

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Feb. 6. Mr Henry Pelham presented to the House several Estimates which had been call'd for.

Feb. 9. The Commons, in a Committee of the whole House on the Supply, considered of the Estimate of the Charge of the Guards, Garrisons, and other his Majesty's Land Forces in Great Britain, for the Year 1728; and a Motion being made, that the Number of effective Men, be 22,955; the same met with Opposition, some Members insisting, that the 8000, Augmentation-Troops, raised last Year, [See Vol. 1. P. 383.] should be entirely reduced: But being apprehensive that the Majority of the Committee were for the Motion, they endeavoured to put off the Debate, by moving, 'That Mr Speaker should resume the Chair;' which being carried in the Negative, by 290 Votes against 84, the Committee came afterwards to the following Resolutions. I. That the Number of effective Men to be provided for Guards and Garrisons in Great Britain, and for Guernsey and Jersey, for the Year 1728, including 1850 Invalids and 555 Men for the six Independent Companies for the Service of the Highlands, be 22,955 Men, Commission and Non-Commission Officers included. II. That the Sum of 786,974 l. 2 s. 9 d. be granted for defraying the Charge of the said 22,955 effective Men. These Resolutions, being the next Day reported, were agreed to by the House.

Debate on the
Number of Land-
Forces for the
Year 1728.

Feb. 12. Sir Paul Methuen, by his Majesty's Command, laid before the House Copies of several Treaties and Alliances, and other Papers, which were order'd to lie on the Table.

Feb. 14. The House, in a grand Committee on the Supply, consider'd of the Estimate of the Charge of 2224 Horse, 1836 Dragoons, and 8034 Foot of the Troops of the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, for the Year 1728. Then a Motion being made, that the Sum of 230,923 l. 11 s. 8 d. be granted for the said Charge, the same occasion'd a great Debate. Mr Horatio Walpole hereupon set forth the State of Affairs in Europe for some Years past, and endeavour'd to shew the absolute Necessity of keeping up all our Forces 'till the End of the present

Mr Walpole's Motion for keeping up 12,000 Hessian Forces for the Year 1728.

Ne-

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Debate thereon.

Mr D. Pulteney.
Mr W. Pulteney.
Sir W. Wyndham.
Sir W. Lawfon.
Mr Brampton.

Mr H. Walpole.

Negotiations, particularly the 12,000 Men, which, by the Treaty of Hanover, Great Britain stood engaged to furnish. He was answer'd by Mr Daniel Pulteney, Mr W. Pulteney, Sir William Wyndham, Sir Wilfrid Lawfon, and Mr Brampton, Member for Malden, who objected, 'That by the said Treaty, the contracting Parties were not obliged to furnish the Succours stipulated therein, but within two Months after Requisition; and that, even in such a case, Great-Britain was only to furnish Men of War, or Transport-Ships, or even Subsidies of Money, at the Choice of the Party requiring the said Succours.' To this Mr Walpole replied, 'That the late King, in his great Wisdom, had thought fit to provide betimes the said Body of 12,000 Men, in order to obtain the Ends of the Treaty of Hanover: That with this View a Convention was made with the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, whose Troops were the most ready at Hand for that Purpose, and much cheaper than the raising and maintaining National Troops: That the Necessity of making this Convention was the greater, by reason of an unforeseen Disappointment from one of the contracting Parties in the foremention'd Alliance: That Time had shewn, that the taking the said 12,000 Men into his Majesty's Service was a wise and necessary Precaution, since they had hitherto prevented the Kindling of a War in Germany; and that as the same Reasons, for which they were taken into Pay, still subsisted, it was Prudence and absolutely necessary to continue that Expence till the intended Congress at Cambray was over.' Then the Question being put upon the Motion above-mentioned, it was carried in the Affirmative by 280 Votes against 84.

The Motion agreed to.

Feb. 15. Sir Charles Turner reported the said Resolution, which was agreed to by the House.

Feb. 16. Mr Chocke, from the Exchequer, presented to the House an Account of the Monies paid into the Exchequer, arisen upon the Duties on Coals and Culm, from September 29th, 1720, to September 29th, 1727, distinguishing each Year; and also an Account of the present annual and other Charges thereupon.

Feb. 19. It was resolved to address his Majesty for a particular and distinct Account of the Distribution of the Sum of 250,000 l. which, in an Account laid before this House, shewing how the Money given for the Year 1727 has been disposed of, is charged to have been issued for other Expences and Engagements, over and above such as are therein particularly specified, for securing the Trade and Navigation of this Kingdom, and preserving and restoring the Peace of Europe; and of the Time or Times when the said Sum of 250,000 l. was issued and distributed.

An Address for
an Account of
250,000 l. charg'd
for Secret Service.

Feb.

Feb. 23. The Commons, in a Committee on the Supply, came, *inter alia*, to the following Resolution, viz. 'That 1,750,000 l. be raised by Grant or Sale to the Bank of England, of Annuities not exceeding 70,000 l. *per Annum*, being after the Rate of 4 l. *per Cent. per Annum*, redeemable by Parliament, to commence from the 24th of June 1728, and to be charged on the Duties on Coals and Culm.' Hereupon Mr William Pulteney observ'd, 'That the Shifting of Funds was but perpetuating Taxes, and putting off the evil Day; and that notwithstanding the great Merit that some had built on the Sinking Fund, it appear'd that the National Debt had been increased since the setting up of that pompous Project.' Upon which Sir Nathaniel Gould, an eminent Merchant, said, 'He apprehended that Gentleman had his Notions out of a Treatise, intitled, *A State of the National Debt*, &c. supposed to be written by that very Gentleman; but that if he understood any Thing, it was Numbers, and he durst pawn his Credit and Reputation to prove that Author's Calculations and Inferences to be false and erroneous.' To this Mr Pulteney reply'd, 'That he took them to be right; and he would likewise pawn his Credit and Reputation to make good his Assertion.' Upon this Sir Robert Walpole took up the Cudgels, and said, 'He would maintain what Sir Nathaniel Gould had advanced.' Several warm Expressions having pass'd on both Sides, Mr Hungerford interposed, in a jocular Speech, that put the House in good Humour, and so the Dispute ended.

Feb. 26. A Petition of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Commons of the City of London, in Common Council assembled, was presented to the House, setting forth, 'That the Duties already laid upon Coals and Culm imported into the Port of London affect their Trade only; and that the Inequality of the Burthen thereof is a great Discouragement to the Manufactures, as well as an Hardship upon the whole trading People in and about the City of London; and praying the Consideration of the House, and such Relief as to the House shall seem meet.' But a Motion being made, and the Question put, that the said Petition be rejected, it was carry'd in the Affirmative, by 214 Voices against 92.

Then Sir Charles Turner reported the above Resolution, which being read a second Time, and a Motion being made and the Question put, that the said Resolution be recommitted, it passed in the Negative: After which the said Resolution was, upon the Question put thereupon, agreed to by the House.

Feb. 29. Sir Paul Methuen reported to the House, 'That their Address for a particular and distinct Account of the Sum of 250,000 l. &c. had been presented to his Majesty, and that his Majesty had commanded him to acquaint the

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The Committee of Supply resolve to raise 1,750,000 l. on the Coal Duty.

Debate thereon.

Mr W. Pulteney.

Sir Nath. Gould.

Mr W. Pulteney.

Sir R. Walpole.

Mr Hungerford.

Petition of the City of London for Relief with regard to the Coal-Duty.

Which is rejected.

Anno 1. Geo. II.
1727-28.

The King's Answer to the Commons Address for an Account of 250,000l. charg'd for Secret Service.

House, " That the late King, his Majesty's Royal Father, " having the like Occasion, received from the last Parliament " the most dutiful Acknowledgments of his great Care and " Wisdom, in taking such Steps, and entering into such Engagements, as he thought would best conduce to the Security of this Kingdom, and the Preservation of the Peace of Europe ; and at the same Time the strongest Assurances of their future Support, in all such farther Measures, as he should find necessary and expedient, for preventing a Rupture, and for the Honour and Advantage of these Kingdoms : And a Power being accordingly given by Parliament to his late Majesty, for issuing and applying such Sums of Money as he should find necessary, for answering and defraying such Expences and Engagements, as had been or should be made for these great and necessary Purposes ; some Part of the Money, mentioned in this Address, had been issued and disbursed by his late Majesty ; and the remaining Part had been applied by his present Majesty, for carrying on the same necessary Services ; for strengthening his Alliances ; and in fulfilling Engagements of the utmost Importance to these Kingdoms, and to the general Tranquility of Europe, and which require the greatest Secrecy. His Majesty therefore hopes, That this House will repose the same Confidence in him ; and be assured, that the Money has been necessarily expended, pursuant to the Power given by Act of Parliament, and for the Uses and Purposes thereby directed ; and that a particular and distinct Account thereof cannot be given without manifest Prejudice to the Publick."

Mr W. Pulteney's Observations thereon.

Upon this Mr Pulteney raised several weighty Objections against such a vague and general Way of Accounting for publick Money, as tending to render Parliaments altogether insignificant and useless ; to cover Imbezzelements ; and to screen corrupt and rapacious Ministers ; Urging the Increase of the National Debt, notwithstanding the so much boasted Sinking Fund, and insisting on having that important Affair immediately debated in a Grand Committee. But the Court-Party waved it, by moving to adjourn the House to the 4th of March ; which, after some Debate, was carried in the Affirmative by 202 Votes against 66.

The Commons in a Grand Committee, consider of the State of the National Debt.

March 4. The Commons, in a Committee of the whole House, consider'd of the State of the National Debt, and the proper Officers were examin'd as to the following Accounts, viz. I. An Account of such National Debts, incurred before December 25, 1716, as are redeemable by Parliament, with the Interest attending the same, and when the same are redeemable. II. An Account of the Money paid into the Exchequer on the Duties on Coals and Culm, from the

the 29th of September 1720, to the 29th of September 1727, distinguishing each Year; and also the Account of the present annual and other Charges thereupon. III. An Account shewing how the Money given for the Service of the Year 1727 hath been disposed of, distinguish'd under the several Heads, until the 15th of February, 1727, with the Deficiency thereupon. IV. An Account of the Estimate of the Debt of his Majesty's Navy, as it stood on the 31st of December, 1727. Then a Motion was made by the Courtiers, 'That it appears, That the Monies already issued and applied towards discharging the National Debts, incurred before Christmas 1716, together with the Sum of 220,435 l. 16 s. 4 d. $\frac{1}{4}$ q. which will be issued at Lady-Day 1728, towards discharging the said Debts, amount to 6,648,762 l. 5 s. 1 d. $\frac{1}{4}$ q. Hereupon there arose a very warm Debate, and Mr Daniel Pulteney endeavour'd to shew the fallacious Tendency of that Motion; and was seconded by Mr William Pulteney, and supported by Lord Morpeth, Mr Shippen, and Sir William Wyndham. They suggested in general, 'That notwithstanding the Supplies that were annually raised in the last Reign; notwithstanding the great Sums of Money given from Time to Time, for extraordinary Expences and Secret Service; notwithstanding the Produce of the Sinking Fund; yet the Publick Debts, for the gradual Discharge of which that famous Project was said to be contrived, were rather increased than lessened; and this in a Time of almost uninterrupted Peace and Tranquility, which must be owing to a very profuse Management of the publick Treasure; and yielded but a very melancholy Prospect; since at this Rate our Debts must still grow faster in case of a War or publick Troubles; so that the heavy and numerous Taxes that now lay upon the Nation, must be perpetuated to the latest Posterity.' Then, entering upon Particulars, they took Notice of the Artifice with which the Accounts that lay before them, were drawn up; That in order to swell that of the Sums said to have been issued and applied towards the Discharge of the publick Debts, incurred before Christmas 1716, there were added to it above three Millions, for the advanced Price given in the Year 1720, in order to make the Irredeemables redeemable, which could not properly be call'd a Payment of those Debts; whereas, on the other hand, in the Account of the present National Debt, or of the Increase of that Debt since Christmas 1716, several large Sums were omitted, particularly One Million, raised upon the Credit of the Civil List, and several Deficiencies on the Land Tax, Malt, and other Funds, which certainly still remained a publick Debt.' Hereupon Sir Robert Walpole, having shew'd the Nature and State of the publick Debts,

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Debate thereon.

Mr Dan. Pulteney.

Mr W. Pulteney.

Lord Morpeth.

Mr Shippen.

Sir W. Wyndham.

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and the Operation and Efficacy of the Sinking Fund, strenuously maintain'd the Assertion contain'd in the Motion. The opposite Party perceiving that the Majority of the Committee were for the Motion, moved that Mr Speaker should resume the Chair; but, after some Debate, the Question being put upon this second Motion, it was carried in the Negative by 250 Voices against 97. Then the Question being put upon the first Motion, it was carried without dividing; and the farther Consideration of the State of the Nation, in relation to the National Debt, was put off to the 8th.

The Resolutions of
the Committee
thereupon;

March 8. The Commons, in a Committee of the whole House, resumed the Consideration of the National Debt, and after a long Debate came to the following Resolutions, which, together with the Resolution of the 4th Instant, are as follow: viz. I. That the Monies already issued and applied towards discharging the National Debts incurred before Christmas 1716, together with the Sum of 220,435 l. 16 s. 4 d. $\frac{3}{4}$ q. which will be issued at Ladyday 1728, towards discharging the said Debts, amount to 6,648,762 l. 5 s. 1 d. $\frac{1}{4}$ q. II. That the several National Debts, including the Debt of the Navy as it stood December 31, 1727, contracted and incurred since December 25, 1716, for answering and defraying the annual Charges and Expences of the Publick, for the current Service of the several Years since the said 25th of December, 1716, amounted on the 8th Day of March, 1727, to the Sum of 2,605,545 l. 16 s. 0 d. $\frac{3}{4}$ q. III. That the National Debt contracted since the 25th of December, 1716, for or in respect of the Sum advanced by the South-Sea Company, pursuant to an Act of the 5th Year of King George I. for the Liberty of increasing their Capital Stock, being so much thereof as was apply'd to the Sinking Fund, doth amount to the Sum of 328,673 l. 4 s. 10 d. $\frac{1}{2}$ q. IV. That the National Debt contracted since the 25th of December 1716, for making good the yearly Deficiencies of the General Fund, from the Establishment thereof to and for the Year ending at Michaelmas, 1726, the Surplus whereof is applicable to the Sinking Fund, amounts to the Sum of 703,740 l. 6 s. 2 d. $\frac{1}{2}$ q.

Wh. b. being reported to the House, occasioned a second Debate.

Mr W. Pulteney.
Sir R. Walpole.

March 12. Sir Charles Turner having reported the above-mentioned four Resolutions, the same occasioned a long Debate, which was chiefly managed by Mr William Pulteney on the one side, and Sir Robert Walpole on the other. Upon the whole, the First of the said Resolutions being read a second Time, and a Motion made, and the Question being put, That the said Resolution be re-committed, it passed in the Negative: After which the said Resolution was agreed to by the House. The Second Resolution being read a second Time, and a Motion being made, and the Question being put,

put, That the said Resolution be re-committed, it passed in the Negative : Then the said Resolution was agreed to by the House. The Third Resolution, being read a second Time, was agreed to by the House. The Fourth Resolution being read a second Time, was, with an Amendment, agreed to by the House, and is as followeth, viz. Resolved, That the National Debt contracted since the 25th of December, 1716, for making good the yearly Deficiencies of the General Fund, from the Establishment thereof, to and for the Year ending at Michaelmas, 1726, the Surplus whereof is applicable to the Sinking Fund, amounts to the Sum of 703,740 l. 6 s. 2 d. $\frac{1}{2}$ q. and that by Virtue of two Acts of Parliament of the 5th Year of King George I. farther Additions have been made to the Capital Stock of the South-Sea Company, for making good several Deficiencies of the original and additional Funds of the said Company, settled and established before the 25th December, 1716, amounting together to the Sum of 290,028 l. 19 s. 11 d. $\frac{1}{2}$ q.

The Courtiers having carried their Point so far, it was moved, and resolved, *Nem. Con.* That an humble Representation be made to his Majesty upon the said Resolutions, and upon the Debate of the House, laying before his Majesty a particular Account of the National Debts discharged and incurred since the 25th Day of December, 1716, distinguished under their proper Heads and Services ; with a State of the Sinking Fund, and of the Publick Credit ; and a Committee was appointed to draw up the said Representation.

April 5, The House was informed, that an Article relating to the Duty upon Wrought-Plate, which amounted to 300,000 l. was omitted to be inserted in the Account of all the Publick Debts, at the Receipt of his Majesty's Exchequer, standing out at Christmas, 1727, with the annual Interest paid for the same : Hereupon it was ordered, That Mr Chocke have Leave to withdraw the said Account ; and that he do present to the House a perfect Account of all the publick Debts, at the Receipt of his Majesty's Exchequer, standing out at Christmas 1727, with the annual Interest paid for the same. This most extraordinary Omission, however, occasioned a great Complaint and Debate, wherein severe Reflections were made on the Neglect and Carelessness, with which the Publick Accounts, laid before the House, were drawn up ; and thereupon it was moved, That, in order to prevent the same for the future, all Accounts, to be delivered to this House from the Exchequer, be signed by the Auditor of the Exchequer, or the Clerk of the Pells, or by their lawful Deputies, or chief Clerks, or

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The Resolutions of
the Committee
agreed to by the
House ;

And a Committee
appointed to draw
up a Representa-
tion of the State
of the National
Debt, the Sinking
Fund, and the
Publick Credit.

Debate concerning
the Omission of an
Article of 300,000 l.
in the Account of
the publick Debts.

Anno 1. Geo. II.
1728.

one of them : But the Question being put upon the said Motion, it was carried in the Negative.

The same Day Mr Chocke presented to the House an Account of all Money that has in any manner been paid, or any Exchequer-Bills which have been made out for Interest, Circulation and Charges of Management of the 4,561,025 l. principal Exchequer-Bills standing out at Christmas 1716, with the like Payments for the three Millions in Exchequer-Bills, made out pursuant to the Acts of the 6th, 8th and 9th Years of King George I. distinct from any Payments relating to any other Exchequer-Bills ; with an Account of what Money on the same has been satisfied, and which of the said Principal Sums in Exchequer-Bills have been paid off. After this the House adjourn'd to the 8th.

Several Accounts
from the Exchequer
presented to
the House,

April 8. Mr Chocke from the Exchequer presented to the House an Account of all the publick Debts at the Receipt of his Majesty's Exchequer, due or standing out at Christmas 1727, with the annual Interest paid for the same. Then the proper Officers were order'd to lay before the House, I. An Account of the Money paid into the Exchequer, arisen upon the Duty on Coals and Culm from March 25, 1719, to March 25, 1728, and also an Account how the same has been applied, distinguishing each Year. II. An Account of what Arrears of Land-Taxes were standing out at Michaelmas 1727. III. An Account of what Arrears of Window-Taxes were standing out at Michaelmas, 1727.

The above Representation reported,

Then Sir William Yonge reported from the Committee appointed to draw up a Representation to be made to his Majesty, upon the Resolutions of the House, of the 12th of March, and upon the Debate of the House, laying before his Majesty a particular Account of the National Debts discharged and incurred since the 25th of December 1716, with a State of the Sinking-Fund, and of the Publick Credit, that they had drawn up the said Representation, which he reported to the House, and being twice read, the same was, after some Debate, with some Amendments, agreed to by the House ; and it was resolved, That the said Representation be presented to his Majesty by the whole House.

And presented to
the King.

April 10. The House presented to the King the said Representation, the Substance whereof being already set forth in the Resolutions of the House thereupon, [See p. 26.] We think it needless to swell this Work with the Particulars at large.

April 11. Mr Speaker reported to the House his Majesty's Answer to their Representation about the National Debt, as follows.

Gentlemen,

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The King's Answer
to the said Repre-
sentation.

Gentlemen,

" I Cannot but be very well pleased with this Representation, which must give general Satisfaction to all my People, by removing those groundless Jealousies and Apprehensions, which have been propagated and dispersed throughout the Kingdom.

" The happy Effects of the flourishing State of the Publick Credit are too sensibly felt and seen, not to be confessed and acknowledged by every Body.

" The Provision made for gradually discharging the National Debt is now become so certain and considerable, that nothing, but some unforeseen Event, can alter or diminish it; which gives us the fairest Prospect of seeing the Old Debts discharged, without any Necessity of incurring New.

" And you may be assured, That it shall be my particular Care and Study to maintain and preserve the Publick Credit; to improve the Sinking Fund; and to avoid all Occasions of laying any new Burthens upon my People."

May 6. Sir Paul Methuen deliver'd to the House a Message sign'd by his Majesty, which was read by Mr Speaker, as follows, viz.

GEORGE R.

" HIS Majesty being under some Engagements, entered into, and concerted with the Advice and Concurrence of the last Parliament, for securing the Trade and Navigation of this Kingdom, and for restoring and preserving the Peace of Europe; and having been enabled to answer and defray the Charges and Expences thereof, as far as they have hitherto become due and payable, and there being still wanting a Sum not very considerable, to perfect and fulfil these Obligations, relying upon the Duty and Affection of his Commons, hopes they will enable him to discharge such Engagements, as still remain unsatisfied upon this Head of Service."

The King's Message for a Vote of Credit.

The Consideration of this Message was put off to the next Day.

May 7. The House took into Consideration his Majesty's Message, and after some Debate, it was at last resolved, by 237 Voices against 101, That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, to declare the Duty and Fidelity of this House to his Majesty, and the entire Confidence which they repose in his Royal Care of, and Goodness to, his People; and to assure his Majesty, that this House will enable

Debate thereon.

A Vote of Credit agreed to, and an Address on that Occasion.

Anno 1. Geo. II.
1728.

enable his Majesty to answer and defray the Charges and Expences, that still remain unsatisfied, of the Engagements entered into and concerted, for securing the Trade and Navigation of this Kingdom, and for restoring and preserving the Peace of Europe.

May 8. The Commons presented the said Address to his Majesty, who return'd the following Answer.

Gentlemen,

King's Answer
thereto.

“ I Return you my Thanks for this very dutiful and affectionate Address; and you may be assured that the Confidence, you repose in me, shall be employ'd for the Publick Good, and Support of the Common Cause.”

May 17. A Motion being made, ‘ That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, that he would be graciously pleased to give Directions, that the proper Officer do lay before this House an Account of the Sale of Woods, and Grants of the Falls of Woods, by his late Majesty, from Christmas, 1715, to June 1, 1727, and how the same have been accounted for : ’ It occasion'd a warm Debate, wherein

Mr W. Pulteney's
Motion for an Ac-
count of Grants of
Timber from the
Crown.

Mr William Pulteney urg'd, ‘ That through the Connivance of some Men in Favour with our late most gracious King, his Majesty's Goodness had been abused in several Grants of considerable Falls of Woods, to the great Detriment and Waste of the Royal Forests, at a Time when the Nation stood in so great need of Timber, for the Repairing and Building of Ships ; and therefore he thought it very proper for the House to inquire by what Means the said Grants came to be obtained.’ He was answered by Sir Robert Walpole, who represented, ‘ That such an Inquiry might be injurious to the Memory of some Dead, and after all, prove altogether unprofitable to the Living.’ Then the previous Question being put, that the Question be now put, it passed in the Negative.

Sir R. Walpole.

May 28. The King came to the House of Peers, and the Commons attending, his Majesty made the following Speech to both Houses :

My Lords and Gentlemen,

King's Speech at
putting an End to
the First Session.

“ THE Dispatch you have given to the Publick Business, and the advanced Season of the Year, make it proper for me to put an End to this Session of Parliament.

“ The Zeal and Unanimity which you have shewn in all your Proceedings, in regard to the true Interest of your Country, and in Support of the Common Cause, have fully answered my Expectations, and will, I am persuaded,

“ give

“ give general Satisfaction here at Home, and cannot fail of
 “ having their due Weight and Influence Abroad.

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“ I expect very soon to hear that the Congress is opened.
 “ The Preliminary Articles having laid so good a Foundation
 “ for a general Pacification, I hope all Parties will bring with
 “ them such favourable Dispositions for finishing and perfect-
 “ ing this desirable Work, that we shall soon see a happy
 “ Conclusion of this important Transaction, with that Satis-
 “ faction to Me and my Allies, which may reasonably be ex-
 “ pected from the Justice of our Cause, and the mutual Con-
 “ fidence which is established among us.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

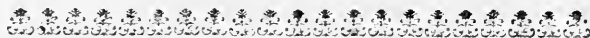
“ I return you my Thanks for the effectual Supplies you
 “ have raised for the Service of the Year. The prudent Ap-
 “ plication you have made of the Produce of the Sinking
 “ Fund will contribute to the Support of the publick Credit;
 “ and the Power you have given me of borrowing 500,000 l.
 “ for the Discharge of the Seamen's Wages, will meet with
 “ universal Approbation.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ It is unnecessary for me to recommend, in any particular
 “ Manner, to your Care, the Preservation of the Publick
 “ Peace in your several Stations and Countries: Your own
 “ Inclinations will naturally lead you, by a due Execution of
 “ the Laws, and a faithful Administration of Justice, to pro-
 “ mote upon all Occasions the Welfare and Prosperity of
 “ my People.

Then the Lord Chancellor prorogued the Parliament to the
 8th of August: They were afterwards farther prorogued to
 the 21st of January.

The Parliament
 prorogued.



SPEECHES and DEBATES

In the SECOND SESSION of the

First Parliament of King GEORGE II.

ON the 21st of January the Parliament being met at
 Westminster, the King came to the House of Peers,
 and the Commons being also come thither, his Ma-
 jesty made the following Speech.

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 1728-29

My

Anno 2. Geo. II.
1728-29.

The King's Speech
at opening the Se-
cond Session.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

" I Am sensible you are met together in Expectation of being informed of the present Situation of publick Affairs; and of receiving that Satisfaction which the Expences already made, and the Apprehension of their being continued for some longer Time, make it just and reasonable for you to desire.

" The Execution of the Preliminary Articles, and the Opening of the Congress at Soissons, laid a Foundation for you to entertain Hopes of seeing, very soon, the happy Fruits and Effects of a general Pacification.

" But the various and extensive Views, which fell under Consideration, in settling and reconciling the different Interests and Pretensions of so many different Powers, appeared to be a Work of so much Time and Difficulty, that the Project of a Provisional Treaty was thought of as a proper Expedient; which being concerted and negotiated among the Ministers of the principal Powers, Parties to the Treaties of Hanover and Vienna, was approved of by me and my Allies, not without reasonable Hopes of the Concurrence of the Imperial Court and the Court of Madrid.

" But no definitive Answer being yet returned by either of them, nor the Project of the Provisional Treaty either accepted, or rejected, the Fate of Europe is still held in Suspence, labouring under Difficulties that unavoidably attend such a doubtful and undetermined Condition.

" It is with no small Concern, that I am again obliged to speak to my Parliament in this State of Uncertainty; nor am I insensible of the Burthens which my Subjects bear, and that in our present Circumstances some may be induced to think, that an actual War is preferable to such a doubtful and imperfect Peace. But as the Exchange is very easy to be made at any Time; and as I am confident I shall not be thought backward in doing myself and the Nation Justice, when a proper Occasion calls upon me for it, I hope you will believe, that a just Regard for the Ease and Interest of my People alone prevailed upon me, rather to suffer some temporary Inconveniencies, with the daily Prospect of obtaining a safe and honourable Peace; than too precipitately to kindle a War in Europe, and to plunge the Nation into still greater and unknown Expences. But how disagreeable soever these Delays may be, nothing is more unjust than to impute them to the Conduct of me, or my Allies. No Endeavours indeed have been wanting to separate and dissolve the happy Union that is established among us; but long Experience, and repeated Proofs of mutual Fidelity, have so strengthened and cemented this

" Alliance,

“ Alliance, founded upon, and united by common Interest,
 “ that all Attempts to weaken it, or to create Jealousies and
 “ Diffidence among us, have proved as vain and fruitless, as
 “ the Insinuations to the contrary are false and groundless.

“ It will nevertheless be incumbent upon us to bring this
 “ important Transaction to a speedy and certain Decision,
 “ that if a Conclusion can be put to it; consistent with the
 “ Security and Preservation of the Rights, Privileges, and
 “ Possessions of Great Britain and my Allies, the Blessings of
 “ Peace may be diffused throughout Europe, and my King-
 “ doms again enjoy the happy Effects of a settled Tranquillity;
 “ or, if this cannot be had, that the Allies may unite with
 “ Vigour and Resolution, and exert themselves in procuring
 “ that Justice and Satisfaction which has been so long de-
 “ layed. If this should unavoidably be the Case, I depend
 “ upon the Zeal and Affection of this Parliament, that they
 “ will cheerfully and effectually support me in carrying on a
 “ just and necessary War.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

“ I wish’d and truly hop’d to have seen the publick Ex-
 “ pences lessened before this Time, but the present Circum-
 “ stances of Affairs oblige me to ask of you such Supplies as
 “ shall be necessary for answering and defraying the Charge
 “ and Services of the ensuing Year, and for enabling me, as
 “ Events may require, to act with Vigour, and in Concert
 “ with my Allies, who have resolved to make the same Pre-
 “ parations, and to keep on Foot all their extraordinary For-
 “ ces: I will order the proper Estimates to be immediately
 “ prepared and laid before you. And as the Produce of the
 “ Sinking Fund has exceeded our Expectations, I must re-
 “ commend it to your Care to make a farther Application of
 “ it to its proper Uses.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ It cannot be expected that I should enter into the several
 “ Causes and Motives, which may have occasioned the pre-
 “ sent Delays in the Courts of Vienna and Madrid; but if,
 “ among other Reasons, Hopes given from hence of creating
 “ Discontents and Divisions among my Subjects, and a Pro-
 “ spect of seeing Difficulties arise at Home, have greatly en-
 “ couraged them in their dilatory Proceedings: I am per-
 “ suaded, that your known Affection to me, and a just Re-
 “ gard for your own Honour and the Interest and Security
 “ of the Nation, will determine you effectually to discourage
 “ the unnatural and injurious Practices of some Few, who
 “ suggest the Means of distressing their Country, and after-
 “ wards clamour at the Inconveniencies which they them-
 “ selves have occasioned. It is more than probable, that
 “ Foreign Courts will wait now for the Result of your Deli-
 “ berations.

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“ berations ; and as you may depend upon my Constancy and
“ Steadiness, that no wicked and groundless Suggestions or
“ Insinuations shall make me depart from my present Pur-
“ poses, so I entirely rely upon your Wisdom and Unani-
“ mity, to convince the World, that such pernicious Designs
“ and Intrigues shall not alter that Affection, Harmony, and
“ good Understanding, which has hitherto subsisted, and I
“ hope will always subsist, between me and my Parliament.

Sir G. Oxenden's
Motion for an Ad-
dress of Thanks.

The Commons being returned to their House, and the Speaker having reported his Majesty's Speech, Sir George Oxenden * mov'd for an Address to return his Majesty the Thanks of the House, for his most gracious Speech ; to congratulate his Majesty upon the Arrival of the Prince of Wales ; to acknowledge his Majesty's Goodness and Wisdom, in avoiding all Difficulties and Delays, by concerting the most expeditious Methods of concluding, with Honour and Justice, the Negotiations depending at Soissons : To express their grateful Sense of his Majesty's tender Regard for the Ease and Interest of his People, in declining to plunge the Nation into greater and unknown Expences, as long as there is a Prospect of obtaining a safe and honourable Peace : To assure his Majesty, that this House, fully convinc'd, that his Majesty's own Honour, and the Honour of the Nation, are, above all Things, dear and precious to him, entirely relies upon his Majesty to do himself and the Nation Justice, as soon as any proper Occasion shall call upon him for it, and to secure the Commerce of this Kingdom : Sir George Oxenden was seconded by Mr Walter Chetwynd, Member for Lichfield, and supported by Mr Edward Thompson, and Sir William Yonge. Some Members hereupon took Exception at the Words to *Secure the Commerce*, instead of which they thought it more proper to say, *Restore the Commerce* : And to support their Opinion, took Notice of the many and great Losses sustain'd by the British Merchants, by the Depredations of the Spaniards, both in Europe and the West-Indies ; not without reflecting on some Persons, for not giving proper Orders to secure our Trade, to repress those Insults, and to make Reprisals, according to the Law of Nations. This occasion'd a Debate, upon the Question, whether the Word *Secure* should stand, or whether *Restore* should be inserted instead of it ; but Sir George Oxenden, Mr Walter Chetwynd, Mr Edward Thompson, Sir William Yonge, Mr Doddington, Mr Horatio Walpole, Lord Finch, Lord Malpas *, Mr Talbot †, Sir William Strickland, Sir Paul Methuen, and Sir Robert Walpole insisted on the former ; and

Debate thereon.

Sir G. Oxenden.
Mr W. Chetwynd.
Mr E. Thompson.
Sir W. Yonge.

Mr Doddington.
Mr H. Walpole.
Lord Finch.
Lord Malpas.
Mr Talbot.
Sir W. Strickland.
Sir P. Methuen.
Sir R. Walpole.

* A Commissioner of the Admiralty.

† A Commissioner of the Admiralty.

‡ Secretary General.

on

on the other Hand, Sir William Wyndham, Mr William Pulteney, Capt. Vernon, Mr Shippen, Sir Joseph Jekyll, Mr Lutwyche, Mr Sandys, and Mr Winnington, were as strenuous for the latter ; and an eminent Courtier having offer'd to produce a Pamphlet, [Intitl'd, *Observations on the Conduct of Great Britain, with regard to the Negotiations and other Transactions abroad, 1729.*] to justify the Conduct of Great Britain, with relation to the supposed Inactivity of our Squadrons, and the Depredations committed by the Spaniards ; and, with that View, containing Abstracts of the Instructions given to Admiral Hosier, and the other Commanders of the British Squadrons ; Mr William Pulteney animadverted upon, and explod'd that Pamphlet, as made up of glaring Misrepresentations of Facts, Inconsistencies, and Contradictions. He urg'd, ' That tho' the Author, by his bold launching into Politicks, his pretending to be let into the deepest Mysteries of State, and his publishing Part of the Instructions given to our Admirals, would be thought to write with Authority ; yet it seem'd very extraordinary, and highly improbable, that an obscure and nameless Pamphleteer should be favour'd with Papers of such Importance and private Nature : That therefore it was more reasonable to believe, that this Scribler had surreptitiously procured these imperfect Lights and lame Abstracts from some of the Under-Clerks, which he printed with his crude and indigested Observations, in order to curry Favour ; for that it could not be supposed, that Men of so great Abilities, as they who are at the Head of our Affairs, should not know the Difference between the Flotilla and Galleons, or that they sail'd from two Ports, at a very great Distance from each other. Mr Pulteney was back'd by Capt. Vernon, Member for Penryn, who said, ' That he would not pretend to determine, whether those Scraps of Instructions publish'd in the Pamphlet in Question, were genuine or forged ; but this he would venture to averr, that there were in them some Things so very odd and inconsistent, as gave them a very suspicious Aspect ; or, if genuine, render'd them impracticable.' Hereupon Sir Joseph Jekyll said, ' That since the Courtiers so strenuously insist'd on the Word *Secure*, he would readily comply with them, provided a small Addition was made to the Address, to put them in Mind of securing the Rights and Liberties of the People. At last the Question being call'd for, and put, Whether the Word *Secure* should stand ? It was carry'd in the Affirmative, by 249 Votes against 87 ; and a Committee was appointed to draw up the said Address.

January 22. Sir George Oxenden reported the Address drawn up by the Committee, which was agreed to.

Jan. 23. The House presented the same to the King.

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1728-29.

Sir W. Wyndham.
Mr W. Pulteney.
Capt. Vernon.
Mr Shippen.
Sir Jos. Jekyll.
Mr Lutwyche.
Mr Sandys.
Mr Winnington.

An Address resolv'd
on and presented.

Anno 2. Geo. II.

1728-29.

The Address.

Most gracious Sovereign,

WE your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal Subjects, the Commons of Great-Britain in Parliament assembled, beg Leave humbly to return our sincere and unfeigned Thanks for your Majesty's most gracious Speech from the Throne.

We congratulate your Majesty upon the safe Arrival of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, so much to the Joy and Satisfaction of your Majesty and all your People.

We are not insensible of the various and extensive Views, which must naturally arise in settling and reconciling the different Interests and Pretensions of so many different Powers, Parties to the Treaties of Hanover and Vienna; and we acknowledge, with the utmost Gratitude, your Majesty's great Wisdom and Prudence, in avoiding, as far as was possible, all Occasions of Difficulties and Delays, by concerting the most expeditious Methods of concluding, with Honour and Justice, the Negotiations depending at Soissons.

We have the Happiness to see your Majesty indefatigable in the Pursuits of the Interests of your People; accommodating and composing the publick Differences, declining the Temptation of Military Glory, and chusing rather to secure to your Subjects their just Rights and Possessions, by the milder Arts of Moderation and Forbearance, than to plunge the Nation unnecessarily into infinite and unknown Expences.

But your faithful Commons are so fully convinced, that your own Honour, and the Honour of your Kingdoms, are Considerations so dear to your Majesty, and so inseparable from your Royal Mind, that we can, with the greatest Confidence imaginable, entirely rely upon your Majesty's undoubted Valour and Resolution to do yourself and the Nation Justice, whenever a proper Occasion calls upon you for it; and we cannot in the least doubt, from your Majesty's constant and due Regard to the Rights, Privileges, and Interests of your People, but that your Princely Care will equally extend itself to the Securing our Commerce, and obtaining a just Satisfaction for the many and great Losses sustain'd by your trading Subjects.

The mutual Harmony and Fidelity, so firmly established and subsisting between your Majesty and your Allies, cannot fail to create in your Commons the highest Satisfaction; and it is with Pleasure we observe, that all Endeavours and Attempts to separate and dissolve this happy Union, of such Consequence to your Kingdoms, and so essential to the preserving the Peace and Tranquillity of Europe, have proved vain and unsuccessful.

We

‘ We beg Leave to assure your Majesty, that we will, with the greatest Chearfulness, raise the Supplies necessary for answering and defraying the Charges and Expences of the ensuing Year, and will not fail to make the proper Disposition of the growing Produce of the Sinking Fund. And if, after all your Majesty’s unwearied Endeavours to procure a safe and honourable Peace, a Rupture should become unavoidable, your Majesty may depend upon the Zeal and Affection of this House, effectually to support your Majesty, in carrying on a just and necessary War, and enable you to act with Vigour in Conjunction with your Allies, as future Events and the Circumstances of Publick Affairs may require.

‘ And as nothing can be more injurious to your Majesty’s Honour, and the Interest and Reputation of your People, than the vile and detestable Practices of those, who by giving Hopes of Discontents, Divisions and Difficulties arising here at Home, encourage the dilatory Proceedings that have hitherto retarded the Conclusion of this important Transaction : We look with the utmost Abhorrence upon the Authors and Contrivers of such base and unnatural Artifices, who suggest the Means of distressing their Country, and clamour at the Inconveniencies which they themselves have occasioned. This makes it highly incumbent upon us to give your Majesty the most unfeigned Assurance, that this House will, by an unshaken Duty and Affection to your Majesty, and by a steady Perseverance in Support of your Government, convince the World, that no false and groundless Insinuations, no wicked Designs and Intrigues whatsoever, shall be able to alter or diminish that Harmony and good Understanding between your Majesty and your Parliament, which our Inclination, Duty, and Interest call upon us inviolably to preserve.’

To this Address the King return’d the following Answer :

Gentlemen,

“ I Thank you for this very dutiful and affectionate Address, and for the Assurances you have given me of your Concurrence and Support in my present Engagements : You may depend upon it, that the Honour and Interest of my People shall be my principal Care and Concern, in all Events.”

His Majesty’s Answer thereto.

Jan. 23. Sir Charles Turner made a Motion for a Supply, which was unanimously resolv’d on. This Resolution was, on the 25th, reported and agreed to. A Supply voted.

Jan.

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Estimate of the
Hessian Forces for
the Year 1729,
presented.

Debate concerning
the Number of
Land-Forces for
the Year 1729.

Mr W. Pulteney.
Mr Shippen.

Jan. 31. Mr Henry Pelham presented to the House an Estimate of the Charge of 2224 Horse, 1836 Dragoons, and 8034 Foot, the Troops of the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, for the Year 1729; which Estimate being read, was order'd to lie on the Table.

Then the Commons being in a Grand Committee on the Supply, a Motion was made for continuing the same Number of Men for Guards and Garrisons in Great-Britain, as were provided for the Year 1728, amounting to 22,955 Men. This was strongly opposed by Mr William Pulteney, and Mr Shippen, who urged, 'That a Standing Army was altogether inconsistent with our Laws and Constitution: That there is no Instance of any regular Force kept in England in Time of Peace, before the unfortunate Reign of King Charles I. That the Armies that were raised in former Days, either to suppress intestine Commotions, or for foreign Service, were always disbanded immediately after those Occasions were over: That the Army in the Time of King Charles I. prov'd no less fatal and oppressive to the Parliament that rais'd it, than to the King himself whose Head they cut off; for tho' they were raised in Defence of Liberty, yet they served at last to support an Usurper, and to establish an arbitrary military Government: That the Army King James II. raised was the primary Cause of his Misfortunes, as it roused the true English Spirit, and created those Fears and Jealousies, which his subsequent Acts of Power and Bigotry made afterwards appear to be but too well grounded: That the Nation were so sensible of the Dangers they had escaped, by the seasonable coming over of a Deliverer, that one Fundamental Article for the Establishment of our Liberties, in the Bill of Rights, is, That the keeping up a standing Army in Time of Peace, is contrary to Law: That, accordingly, after the Peace of Ryf-wick, the greatest Part of the Army was disbanded; and though, upon the just Fear of a new War, the Parliament complemented King William with an Establishment of 10,000 Men, yet the same was not obtained without Opposition; many honest and sober Men, among the warmest Sticklers for the Revolution, looking upon it as an Encroachment on our Liberties, and being justly apprehensive it would prove a dangerous Precedent: That during the late War, our Land-Forces, together with those in our Pay, amounted to above 200,000 Men, the Load of which still lies heavy upon us; but after the Peace of Utrecht, there was a general Reduction, except about 12,000 Men: That upon the late King's Accession, when the Rebellion broke out in Scotland and England, the Army was, indeed, augmented with several Regiments, and other additional Troops: but these were again

again reduced not long after : That in the Year 1727, upon the Prospect of the great Dangers that were apprehended from the Treaty of Vienna, an Augmentation of about 8000 Men was moved for in this House ; [See Vol. I. p. 383.] but the same was warmly opposed ; nor was it granted but upon Assurance that this Expence should cease, as soon as the extraordinary Occasion that call'd for it was over : That the Event has shewn, that most of these Dangers were ill grounded and chimerical, the Court of Vienna having readily agreed to Preliminaries, that have been look'd upon as a sufficient Foundation for a general Pacification. That, at the Solicitations both of the Emperor and King of France, the King of Spain being prevail'd upon to come into the same Measures, the Congress of Soissons was form'd, in which, it seems, a Provisional Treaty has been negotiated, among the Ministers of the principal Powers, Parties to the Treaties of Hanover and Vienna, which has been approved of by his Majesty, and his Allies, not without reasonable Hopes of the Concurrence of the Courts of Vienna and Madrid : That therefore this seem'd a most proper Time to retrench our annual Expences, and by using the most exact OEconomy, to shew they were willing to ease the Nation of the immense Load of Debt that lies upon it : That besides the present Establishment of Guards and Garrisons in Great Britain, the Forces in Minorca, Gibraltar, and the West-Indies, we pay for 12000 Hessian Auxiliaries and Subsidies to the King of Sweden, and the Duke of Wolfembutte : And since, by the Situation of the Publick Affairs, it was apparent, that those extraordinary Expences might with Safety be lessen'd, they ought to begin with reducing, if not All, at least Part of the Additional Forces that were rais'd two Years before : That his Majesty was entirely possess'd of the Hearts of his People, wherein his best Security is ; but if any Thing could lessen their Affections to the present happy Settlement, and make the Nation jealous and apprehensive of Dangers to our excellent Constitution, it would be to see such numerous Forces kept up, while there was no manner of Business for them, either at Home or Abroad.' To this Mr Walpole and Mr Doddington answer'd, ' That Arguments against Standing Armies, drawn from antient Times, were foreign and inconclusive, since, in those Days, there were no regular Forces kept up in any Part of Europe ; whereas, at present, there is no Kingdom nor State without them : That the supposed Inconveniencies and Dangers from Standing Armies ought not to be of any Weight, since more Instances might be produc'd of their being beneficial than of their being hurtful ; for many States, and, in particular, the Republick of Holland, owe the Preservation of their Liberties to their regular

Anno 2. Geo. II.
1728-29.

Mr Walpole.
Mr Doddington.

Anno 2. Geo. II.
1728-29.

regular Troops; and others have been enslaved by encroaching ambitious Neighbours for want of them: That the Body of Forces now on the Establishment, though larger than in former Times, could give no Jealousy or Umbrage to any reasonable Englishman; for, if it deserves the Name of an Army, it is but an Annual and Parliamentary Army, under the severest and strictest Discipline, and not only dependent upon, but subservient and useful to the Civil Power; and therefore it was no less unjust than absurd, to entertain and infuse Apprehensions from such an Army: That as long as the main Reasons, for which our National Forces were increased, subsisted, so long, in Prudence, ought that Addition to be kept up. That the publick Affairs have now, indeed, a fairer Aspect than some Years ago, yet no reasonable Man would have the Army reduc'd before a Peace is fully concluded: That a provisional Treaty for that Purpose had been concerted at Soissons, and approved of by his Majesty and his Allies; but as this Project was not yet accepted, either by the Court of Vienna or that of Madrid, the Fate of Europe was still undetermin'd; and therefore to reduce our Forces in such a State of Uncertainty, which, of course, implies Danger, would be the highest Piece of Folly, and expose the Nation to fresh Insults and Depredations from the Spaniards.' Then the Question being put upon the Motion, the following Resolutions were carried without dividing. I. That the Number of effective Men to be provided for Guards and Garrisons in Great Britain, and for Guernsey and Jersey, for the Year 1729, be including 2815 Invalids, and 555 Men, which the Six Independent Companies consist of, for the Service of the Highlands, 22955 Men, Commission and Non-Commission Officers included. II. That the Sum of 784,983 l. 12 s. 10 d. be granted to his Majesty for defraying the Charge of the said 22955 effective Men, for Guards, Garrisons, and other his Majesty's Land Forces in Great Britain, Guernsey and Jersey, for the Year 1729.

Feb. 3. The above Resolutions being reported were agreed to by the House.

The same Day, Sir George Oxenden, from the Commissioners of the Navy, laid before the House, an Account of the Amount of the Interest-Money which had been paid for Navy and Victualling Bills, from the 25th of December, 1721, to the 25th of December, 1728. This Account gave Occasion to Mr Pulteney to take Notice, 'That notwithstanding the good OEconomy that was said to be establish'd in the Management of the Revenues, the publick Debts still increased every Year;' to which the Courtiers answer'd, That the contrary plainly appear'd, from the Produce of the Sinking Fund, by Means whercof, the Supplies

Mr Pulteney's Observations on the Publick Debts.

for this Year would be raised, without laying any new Taxes; Hereupon it was moved, ' That this House will raise the Supplies necessary for the current Service of this Year, without creating any new Debt upon any Fund whatsoever : But the Question being put thereupon, it pass'd in the Negative.

Anno 7. Geo. II.
1728-29.

Feb. 5. Mr Pelham presented to the Commons an Account of Subsidies payable by his Majesty to the King of Sweden, and the Duke of Brunswick Lunenburg Wolfenbuttle ; Then a Motion was made, and the Question put, That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, to desire that this House may be inform'd what Demands were made in Behalf of the Crown of Great Britain, to his Majesty's Allies, for Succours of Troops, Ships, or Money, which they were obliged to furnish, in Pursuance of Treaties, during the late Hostilities, and Siege of Gibraltar, and in what Manner the said Demands were comply'd with ; or whether any Measures were settled and concerted between the Crown of Great Britain and its Allies, in order to carry on a general and vigorous War, in case the Project of the Preliminary Articles of Peace, under Consideration during the Siege of Gibraltar, had not been accepted : But the Question being put, it was carry'd in the Negative.

Motion for an Address to his Majesty to know what Succours he had demanded from his Allies, during the late Hostilities.

Feb. 7. Mr Pelham laid before the House a Copy of the Establishment of the Hessian Forces for the Year 1729 ; and then, in a grand Committee, the Commons consider'd the Subsidies payable to Foreign Princes. Mr Pelham, Sir William Yonge, and some other Members, having shewn the Necessity of making good his Majesty's Engagements, which the Commons had made their own, by approving them ; Mr William Pulteney said thereupon, ' He had so great Regard for the King's Honour, that he would readily, at any Time, give his Vote to enable his Majesty to answer and discharge his Engagements ; but that, at the same Time, out of Regard to their Country whom they represented, and who labour'd under a heavy Load of Debts and Taxes, he thought it a Duty incumbent on them, to retrench all superfluous Expences : That in Relation to the Demand now before them, he would not enter upon the Inquiry, whether such a large Body of Hessian Auxiliaries was necessary at a Time of perfect Tranquility, at least, of Inaction : But he begg'd Leave to observe, that the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel used to keep 7000 Men constantly in his Pay ; and as he had only added 5000 Men, to make up the 12,000, which he was to furnish to the Allies of Hanover, it seem'd but reasonable that Great-Britain should pay for no more than these 5000 Additional Troops ; adding, That the same might be said, with respect to the Duke of Wolfenbuttle, who, notwithstanding the Subsidy he received from Great Britain, maintain'd no more

Debate on the Hessian Troops.

Mr H. Pelham.
Sir W. Yonge.

Mr W. Pulteney.

Anno 2. Græ. II.
1728-29.

Sir R. Walpole.

Troops than he did before.' Hereupon Sir Robert Walpole endeavour'd to justify the Measures that had been taken, in Consequence of the Hanover Alliance; and in particular to shew how useful this Body of 12,000 Hessians had been, towards preventing the kindling of a War, for which the Court of Vienna, with the Assistance of Spanish Subsidies, had made great Preparations, and, in order thereto, had retain'd Troops of three Electors, besides the Augmentation of its own. Adding, That for his Part, he was fully convinc'd, that had it not been for the Hessians, the Emperor would not have come into the Preliminaries, and other Pacifick Measures; and therefore they ought not to grudge an Expence, which had already prov'd so beneficial to the Tranquillity of Europe. To this, Sir Joseph Jekyll and Mr Lutwyche, reply'd, 'That whatever Gloſs might be put upon such Measures, yet, in their Opinion, they were repugnant to the constant Maxims, by which England, in former Times, steer'd and squar'd its Conduct, with relation to its Interest Abroad: That when our glorious Ancestors had any Quarrels with their Neighbours, they bravely fought them 'till they either beat them into Peace, or forc'd them to buy it; of which there were many Instances in our History: That our Navy is our natural Strength; and, if well managed, our best Defence and Security: But if, in order to avoid a War, we are so condescending and so free-hearted as to buy and maintain the Forces of Foreign Princes, we are never like to see an End of such extravagant Expences.' They were replied to by Sir Philip Yorke and Mr Talbot; but at last, by a Majority of 256 Voices against 91, the following Resolutions were carry'd, viz. I. That the Sum of 241,259 l. 1 s. 3 d. be granted to his Majesty, for defraying the Expence of 12,000 Hessians, taken into his Majesty's Pay, for the Year 1729. II. The Sum of 50,000 l. for one Year's Subsidy to the King of Sweden, pursuant to a Treaty dated the 14th of March, 1726-7. III. The Sum of 25,000 l. for one Year's Subsidy to the Duke of Wolfenbüttele, pursuant to a Treaty dated the 25th of Nov. 1727.

An Address that the Foreign Troops in British Pay may be clothed with British Cloth.

Feb. 10. These Resolutions being reported were agreed to by the House, without dividing: But it was resolv'd to address his Majesty, That whenever it shall be necessary to take any Foreign Troops into his Service, he will be graciously pleas'd to use his Endeavours, that they be clothed with the Manufactures of Great Britain.

A Motion for an Account of what is due to the South Sea Company, has been made by the Spaniards.

Feb. 18. A Motion was made, that the Court of Directors of the South Sea Company do lay before the House an Account of all Demands, with the Value thereof, which the Company has, since the Year 1717, had upon the Spaniards, for Seizures made by them of Ships, or other Effects of the said

said Company, together with an Account of what Satisfaction has been made to the Company for the said Losses, and how much of the same still remains unsatisfy'd: But the Question being put thereupon, it was carry'd in the Negative.

Feb. 21. A Petition of the Merchants trading to, and interested in the British Plantations in America, in Behalf of themselves and many others, was presented to the House, and read, complaining of great Interruptions, for several Years past, of the Trade of this Kingdom to the British Colonies in America, by the Spaniards, whose Depredations in those Seas endanger the entire Loss of that valuable Trade; and that the Petitioners are without Remedy, for want of proper Powers for the Recovery of their Losses; and that the Spaniards treat such of his Majesty's Subjects, as have fallen into their Hands, in a very barbarous and cruel Manner; and praying the Consideration of the House, and such timely Remedy as the House shall think fit: This Petition, after some Debate, was referr'd to a Committee of the whole House.

Feb. 24. The Order of the Day being read, for going into a Grand Committee on Ways and Means, a Motion was made, and the Question was propos'd, That it be an Instruction to the said Committee, that they do consider of proper Means to take off the Duties upon Soap and Candles, granted and made a Security for several large Sums of Money, advanced for the Service of the Publick upon Parliamentary Credit, the greatest Part of the Surplusses whereof belong to the Sinking Fund, appropriated to the discharging the National Debt, incurred before the 25th of December, 1716: But the previous Question being put, that the Question be now put, it passed in the Negative, by a Majority of 217 Voices against 79.

March 11. A Motion was made, 'That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, that he would direct the proper Officers to lay before the House a particular and distinct Account of the Distribution of the Sum of 60,000 l. which in an Account laid before this House, shewing how the Money given for the Service of the Year 1728, has been disposed of, is charged to have been issued to perfect and fulfil the Obligations his Majesty is under, on account of Engagements enter'd into and concerted, for securing the Trade and Navigation of this Kingdom, and for restoring and preserving the Peace of Europe.

March 13. A Bill was order'd to be brought in, *For the more effectual preventing Bribery and Corruption in the Elections of Members to serve in Parliament.*

The same Day Petitions of divers Merchants trading to Portugal, Spain, and Italy, &c. were presented to the House

Anno 2. Geo. II.
1728-29.

Petition of the American Merchants relating to the Depredations of the Spaniards.

Which are referred to the Grand Committee.

Motion for taking off the Duty on Soap and Candles.

Motion for an Account of 60,000 l. charg'd for Secret Service.

A Bill against Bribery at Elections order'd to be brought in.

Anno. 2. Geo. 11.
1728-29.

Petition of the
Portuguese, Span-
ish and Italian
Merchants relat-
ing to the Depre-
dations of the
Spaniards.

Which is referr'd
to the Grand
Committee.

Resolution of the
House relating to
the American
Traders Petitions.

And an Address
thereon presented
to the King.

and read, complaining of great Losses for several Years past, by their Ships and Effects having been seiz'd in the Harbours of Spain, and taken at Sea by Spanish Men of War and Privateers, and confiscated; and tho' regular Application had been made for Redress, and Proofs given of the Losses; and Satisfaction might have been demanded at the Court of Madrid, yet no Benefit had been receiv'd thereby; and therefore praying the Consideration of the House, and such Relief as to the House shall seem fit. These Petitions were referr'd to the Committee of the whole House.

Then the House, having resolv'd it self into the said Committee, consider'd farther of the Petitions of divers Merchants and others, interested in the British Plantations in America; proceeded in the farther hearing of the Petitioners; went thro' the Evidence; and, at last, after some Debate, put off the farther Consideration of that Affair to the 20th, but came to the following Resolution, viz. 'That from the Peace concluded at Utrecht, in the Year 1713, to this Time, the British Trade and Navigation to and from the several British Colonies in America, has been greatly interrupted by the continual Depredations of the Spaniards, who have seiz'd very valuable Effects, and have unjustly taken and made Prize of great Numbers of British Ships and Vessels in those Parts, to the great Loss and Damage of the Subjects of this Kingdom, and in manifest Violation of the Treaties subsisting between the two Crowns.' Then Mr Winnington, by Direction from the Grand Committee, mov'd, and it was accordingly resolv'd *Nem. Con.* That an humble Address be presented to the King, to desire his Majesty will use his utmost Endeavours to prevent such Depredations; to procure just and reasonable Satisfaction for the Losses sustain'd; and to secure to his Subjects the free Exercise of Commerce and Navigation to and from the British Colonies in America.

March 14. Mr Winnington reported the said Resolution, which was agreed to.

March 17. The Commons, with their Speaker, having attended the King with this Address, his Majesty return'd the following Answer.

Gentlemen,

His Majesty's An-
swer thereto.

" I Have always had the greatest Regard and Concern for
" the Commerce and Navigation of my Kingdoms; I
" am sensibly affected with the Losses sustain'd by my Trading
" Subjects; I have upon all proper Applications given the
" strictest Orders for procuring just and reasonable Satisfac-
" tion; and you may be assured, that I will use my best
" Endeavours

“ Endeavours to answer the Desires and Expectations of my People, upon an Affair of so much Importance.”

Anno 2. Geo. II.
1728-29.

March 19. The Lords sent a Message to the Commons, desiring a present Conference, relating to Gibraltar and Minorca; which being agreed to, the Managers for the Lords communicated to those of the Commons a Resolution which the Lords had come to, as follows: viz. ‘ Resolv’d by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled, that they do entirely rely upon his Majesty, That he will, for the maintaining the Honour, and securing the Trade of this Kingdom, take effectual Care in the present Treaty, to preserve his undoubted Right to Gibraltar and the Island of Minorca.’

The Lords, at a Conference with the Commons, desire their Concurrence with a Resolution relating to Gibraltar and Minorca.

The Lord Malpas, one of the Managers for the Commons, having reported the Conference to the House, it was resolv’d to address his Majesty for a Copy of the Letter written by his late Majesty to the King of Spain, in 1721, relating to Gibraltar. This may be found in the *APPENDIX*.

An Address for a Copy of a Letter from King George I. to the King of Spain, relating to Gibraltar, which is accordingly laid before the House.

March 21. The said Letter being laid before the House, the same was taken into Consideration, together with the Lords Resolution above-mentioned; upon which, there was a warm Debate. Many severe Reflections were made on those who first advised his late Majesty to write such a Letter, as either implied, or at least was taken by the Spaniards, as a positive Promise of giving up Gibraltar; and therefore might be look’d upon as the main Source and Occasion both of the subsequent Measures that have been pursu’d to recover that false Step, and of the Difficulties we at present labour under.’ The Courtiers endeavour’d to justify those Measures, and assur’d the House, ‘ That effectual Care had been taken in the present Negotiation, to secure the Possession of Gibraltar to the Crown of Great-Britain:’ But the Country-Party answer’d, ‘ That the same did not plainly appear by the Tenor of the Provisional Treaty; and therefore mov’d, That to the Lords Resolution, now under Consideration, the following Words might be added, viz. ‘ And that all Pretensions on the Part of the Crown of Spain to the said Places be specifically given up.’ But after some farther Debate, the Question being put upon the said Motion, it was carried in the Negative, by 267 Voices against 111. After this, the Question being put, That this House does agree with the Lords in the said Resolution, it was carried in the Affirmative without dividing.

Debate thereon.

The Commons agree to the above Resolution of the Lords.

The same Day, a Bill, *For the more effectual preventing Bribery and Corruption in the Election of Members to serve in Parliament*, was read the first, and order’d to be read a second Time.

The Bribery-Bill twice read.

March

Anno 2. Geo. II.
1729.

And committed.

March 24. The said Bill having been read a second Time, was committed to a Committee of the whole House.

March 25. The above Resolution having been form'd into an Address, both Houses presented the same to his Majesty, who return'd the following Answer :

My Lords and Gentlemen,

His Majesty's Answer to the above Resolution of both Houses.

“ I Thank you for the Confidence you repose in me, I will take effectual Care, as I have hitherto done, to secure my undoubted Right to Gibraltar, and the Island of Minorca.

The King's Answer to the Address for an Account of 60,000l. charg'd for Secret Service.

The same Day, Sir Paul Methuen deliver'd to the Commons the following Answer to their Address of the 11th Instant, viz. “ That the Sum of 60,000l. mentioned in that Address, had been issued and disburs'd, pursuant to the Power given to his Majesty by Parliament, for necessary Services and Engagements enter'd into for restoring and preserving the Peace of Europe, and which require the greatest Secrecy ; and therefore, a particular and distinct Account of the Distribution of it, could not possibly be given, without a manifest Prejudice to the Publick.”

March 27. The Commons, in a Grand Committee, consider'd farther of the Petition of several Merchants relating to the Spanish Depredations ; heard some of the Petitioners ; examin'd Witnesses ; and after a warm Debate, put off the farther Consideration of that Matter to the 2d of April.

The Bribery-Bill pass'd, and sent up to the Lords.

April 1. The Bill, *For the more effectual preventing Bribery and Corruption in Elections* was read the third Time, pass'd, and sent to the Lords by Mr Watkin Williams Wynne, Knight of the Shire for Denbigh.

Resolutions of the House relating to the Portuguese, Spanish, and Italian Merchants Petitions.

April 2. Several Papers from the Admiralty-Office were laid before the House, and all of them refer'd to the Grand Committee, who made some farther Progress in the Consideration of the several Petitions, complaining of the Spanish Depredations ; and then this Affair was again adjourn'd to the 3d of April ; when, after a Debate, the Committee came to the following Resolutions, viz. I. That several Ships, Merchandizes, and Effects, belonging to the Merchants of this Kingdom trading to Portugal, Spain, and Italy, have been taken and seiz'd by the Spaniards, in manifest Violation of the Treaties subsisting between the two Crowns, for which no Restitution has yet been made ; and that the Masters and Crews of several of the said Ships have been barbarously and inhumanly treated. II. That in order to take the necessary Care of the Interests and Properties of his Majesty's Subjects, and those of his Allies, very much concern'd in

in the Cargo and Effects belonging to the Flota and Galleons, and that all possible Justice might be done to all Parties interested therein; and to the End that the said Treasure should not be employ'd in carrying on and supporting dangerous Measures and Engagements, against his Majesty and his Allies, the Orders and Instructions given to Vice-Admiral Hoffer to block up the Flota and Galleons; and to endeavour to secure and detain them, without any Embezzlement, until Justice and Satisfaction should be given to his Majesty and his Allies, were just, prudent, and necessary, tending very much to prevent an open Rupture, and to preserve the Peace and Tranquility of Europe.

Anno 2. Geo. II.
1729.

April 4. The above Resolutions being reported were agreed to by the House; and then, it was farther resolv'd, 'That an Address be presented to his Majesty, that he will use his best Endeavours to obtain all just and reasonable Satisfaction for the Losses and Damages, which the Merchants of this Kingdom trading to Portugal, Spain, and Italy, have sustain'd by the Spaniards taking and seizing several of their Ships, Merchandizes, and Effects, in manifest Violation of the Treaties subsisting between the two Crowns.' The House also order'd, That the above-mention'd Resolutions be laid before his Majesty, at the same Time with the said Address, by such Members as were of the Privy-Council.

Address to the
King thereon.

April 9. Sir Paul Methuen acquainted the House, 'That the said Address and Resolutions having been laid before the King, his Majesty was pleas'd to command him to acquaint the House,' "That his Majesty was always extremely concerned when he heard of the Losses and Sufferings of his Subjects; and would continue to use his best Endeavours, as he had hitherto done, upon all Occasions, to obtain for them just and reasonable Satisfaction."

His Majesty's An-
swer thereto.

April 11. Upon a Motion of Mr * Scrope, Member for Bristol, it was resolv'd to address his Majesty for an Account of the Produce of the Civil List Revenues, within the Year, from Midsummer 1727 to Midsummer 1728, over and above the annual, weekly, or other Payments and Incumbrances thereon, and over and above all Grants made by any of his Majesty's Predecessors: And some other Papers relating to the particular Receipts of the said Revenues, were call'd for, and laid before the House.

Accounts relating
to the Civil List
Revenue laid be-
fore the House.

April 22. Several Papers relating to the Civil List Revenues, were laid before the House.

April 23. The Commons went into a Grand Committee on the Supply; and after Examination of the Commissioners
of

Anno 2. Geo. II.
1729.

Motion for granting to the King 115,000*l.* on Account of Arrears in the Civil List Revenues.

Debate thereon.
Mr Scrope.

of the Customs and Excise, the Post-Master General, and other Officers concern'd in the Civil List Revenues, the Courtiers endeavour'd to prove, 'That there were so great Arrears standing out on the several Branches of those Revenues, that they fell short of producing within the Year, the clear Sum of 800,000 *l.* which was settled for his Majesty's Civil List; and hereupon Mr Scrope mov'd, 'That the Sum of 115,000 *l.* be granted to his Majesty, upon account of the Arrears of his Civil List Revenues, to be replaced and refunded, for the Use and Benefit of the Publick, out of such Arrears of the said Revenues, as shall be standing out at his Majesty's Demise, and together with the said Sum of 115,000 *l.* shall be more than sufficient to make up the Produce of the said Revenues 800,000 *l. per Annum*, during his Majesty's Life, to be computed from the 25th. of June 1727. Though the Design of this Motion was easily apprehended, yet many Members express'd their Surprize, that it should be made so late in the Session, and after the Recess of Easter, and when it was generally understood that there was no farther Demand of Money to be made; since it related to an Account, said by the Member who made the Motion, to have been closed at Midsummer 1728, and consequently proper in every Respect, if at all, to have been brought in very early in the Session, and to have been considered in a full House; and this Motion appeared to them the more extraordinary, because, in the former Session, the several Duties and Revenues granted by the Act for the better Support of his Majesty's Household, and of the Honour and Dignity of the Crown, were understood, and appear'd by the Accounts then before the House, to produce yearly much above the Sum of 800,000 *l.* for which they were given; and therefore the said Motion was vigorously oppos'd by Mr William Pulteney, and other Members, who mov'd, 'That these Accounts and Papers should be referr'd to a Select Committee, with Power to send for such other Accounts, and to call before them and examine such Officers of the Revenue as they judg'd necessary, and then to report to the House a true State of the Fact, and whether it did appear to them that there really was such a Deficiency in the Produce of the Civil List Revenues.' But this was oppos'd by Sir Robert Walpole, and Mr Scrope who had delivered in these Accounts; and the Question being put upon Mr Pulteney's Motion, it passed in the Negative. Then it was moved by the Country Party, 'That this Affair might be considered in a full House, and that for that Purpose all Leaves of Absence might be revok'd, and the Members summon'd to attend; which having also passed in the Negative, the

Question

Mr W. Pulteney.

Sir R. Walpole.

Question was put upon Mr Scrope's Motion, which was carry'd in the Affirmative, by 241 Voices against 115. The Reader will find a List of the Members who voted *Pro* and *Con* on this remarkable Occasion in the *APPENDIX*.

April 24. The Resolution above, being reported, was agreed to by the House.

April 30. The Commons, in a Grand Committee, consider'd of a Bill for settling the Price of Corn and Grain imported, &c. and after some Debate, the Resolution for granting to his Majesty the Sum of 115,000 l. on account of Arrears due on the Civil-List Revenues, were made Part of that Bill, which afterwards pass'd into an Act.

May 6. The Lords sent back to the Commons the Bill, *For the more effectual preventing Bribery and Corruption in the Election of Members*; with some Amendments to enforce that Law, by increasing the Penalty of 50 l. to 500 l. and adding other Clauses.

May 7. The Commons having taken these Amendments into Consideration, some of the Courtiers represented, 'That the Lords making Alterations in a Bill of this Nature was an Encroachment upon the Rights and Privileges of the House of Commons, who were the sole Judges of the Merits of the Elections of their own Members.' To this Mr William Pulteney answer'd, 'That the Freedom of Parliament is essentially necessary to the Preservation of our ancient Constitution: And the Freedom of Parliamentary Elections the most valuable Branch of the Rights and Liberties of Englishmen, of which, the Lords are the proper Guardians, as well as the Commons, both as a Part of the Legislature, and as the supreme Court of the Kingdom: That the Freedom of Elections, and consequently of Parliaments, is the great Bulwark of Popular Liberty against the Encroachments and Oppressions of arbitrary Power and wicked Ministers: That if ever this Bulwark should be thrown down by Force, or undermin'd by Corruption, the very Essence of our excellent Constitution would be lost, and we should no longer be a free People: And therefore no Man, who had any Sense of, or Value for Liberty, could either think the Penalties against Corruption too severe, or grudge the Lords the Honour of having made the Provisions of this necessary Law more efficacious. Then the Question being put for agreeing to the Amendment made by the Lords, it was carried in the Affirmative, by two Voices only, viz. 91 to 89.

May 14. The King came to the House of Lords with the usual State, and the Commons attending, his Majesty gave the Royal Assent to several publick and private Bills, and then made a Speech to both Houses of Parliament, as follows,

Anno 2. Geo. II.
1729.

The above Motion
agreed to by the
House.

Debate concerning
the Amendments
made to the Bri-
bery-Bill by the
Lords,

Mr W. Pulteney.

With the same Motion,
and the Bill, pass'd.

Anno 2. Geo. II.
1729.

King's Speech at
putting an End to
the Second Session.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ **T**HE Season of the Year, and the Dispatch you have given to the publick Business, make it proper for me to put an End to this Session of Parliament; which I cannot do without expressing my Satisfaction at the just Regard you have shewn upon all Occasions, to my Honour, and to the true Interest of my People.

“ The Prudence and Temper, with which you have proceeded at this critical Conjunction, have been very acceptable to me, and cannot fail of meeting with general Approbation: Your several Determinations, upon Matters of the greatest Nicety and Importance, have shewn you not insensible of the Difficulties we labour under, without suffering yourselves to be transported, and carried into any unreasonable Warmths and Animosities. You have consider'd the Losses of our Merchants, with a becoming Compassion and Concern; and received their Complaints in such a Manner, as will best conduce to the obtaining them Justice and Satisfaction; and you may be assur'd, no Endeavours shall be wanting, on my part, to answer the Expectations and Wishes of my People.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

“ The Supplies which you have granted me, and so effectually rais'd, in a Manner the least burthensome to my Subjects, are a new Proof of your Zeal, Affection, and Readiness to support me in the Defence and Protection of the Rights and Privileges of my Kingdom. It is a great Satisfaction to me to observe, that you have been thus able to supply the necessary Charges and Expences that have been unavoidably brought and continu'd upon us, and at the same Time to make a farther Progress in lessening and reducing the National Debt.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ I have already acquainted you, that it being necessary for me to visit my German Dominions this Year, I have determin'd to make the Queen Regent here, during my Absence; and I must, in a particular Manner, recommend it to you all, to make her Administration as easy as possible, by preserving the Peace and Quiet of the Kingdom, in your several Stations and Countries; and by endeavouring to discountenance and restrain the vile and seditious Practices of raising unjust Clamours, and creating Discontents in the Minds of my People.”

The Parliament
prorogued.

Then the Lord Chancellor prorogued the Parliament to the 22d of July. They were afterwards prorogued to the 13th of January.

S P E E C H E S

SPEECHES and DEBATES

In the THIRD SESSION of the

First Parliament of King GEORGE II.

THE King came to the House of Peers, on the 13th of January, and the Commons attending, his Majesty made the following Speech :

Anno 3. Geo. II.
1729-30.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

IT is with great Satisfaction I acquaint you, that we have at length extricated ourselves from the many Difficulties and Inconveniences that attended the uncertain State of Affairs in Europe, by having concluded an absolute Peace with the Crown of Spain.

King's Speech at
opening the Third
Session.

" This Negotiation hath been carry'd on, and finish'd, with a perfect Union, Harmony, and Fidelity, between me and my Allies, with no other View but to prevent the Miseries and Confusion of a War, which if once kindled in Europe, it had been as hard to know the End, as to determine the Success of such a fatal Event.

" As this Alliance is built upon the Foundation, and is agreeable to the Purport and Intentions, of former Treaties, without any Alterations in the principal Articles, but such as tend to render more effectual, what the contracting Powers in the Quadruple Alliance were before engaged to see perform'd, it is very justly to be presum'd, that from this happy Beginning, the great Work, of a general Pacification, will soon be perfect and compleat.

" But if, contrary to Expectation, and in Resentment of the present Engagements, any new Troubles, altho' with little Prospect of Success, should be rais'd in Europe, to oppose or disappoint the Execution of them, I am confident I shall not want the Support and Assistance of my Parliament in so just a Cause, which hath the joint Concurrence of so many considerable Powers, for the Honour and Credit of the present Measures, and their united Strength, in Maintenance of our mutual Stipulations.

" In the mean Time, I can assure you that I have made it my first Care to consult the immediate Interests of these my Kingdoms, preferable to any other Consideration, and at the Hazard of all other Events.

" All former Treaties and Conventions made with Spain, in favour of our Trade and Navigation, are renewed and confirmed ; not only a free and uninterrupted Exercise of

Anno 3. Geo. II.
1729-30.

“ our Commerce, for the future, is restored ; but just and
“ ample Restitution and Reparation, for unlawful Seizures
“ and Depredations, are expressly stipulated and agreed to :
“ In general, all Rights, Privileges, and Possessions, in any
“ Manner belonging to me and my Allies, are solemnly re-
“ established, confirmed and guarantuyed, and not one Con-
“ cession is made to the Prejudice of me or my Subjects.

“ By this Means, a Foundation is laid for removing all
“ former Animosities and Misunderstandings between the
“ Kingdoms of Great Britain and Spain : And it is not at all
“ to be doubted, but that, by a faithful Execution of our
“ reciprocal Engagements, a perfect Friendship betwixt the
“ two Nations, united by the common Ties of mutual In-
“ terest, may be more strongly established and cemented than
“ ever.

“ And that my Subjects might reap the earliest Fruits of
“ this advantageous Peace, I gave Orders for the immediate
“ Reduction of a great Number of my Land-Forces, and for
“ laying up and discharging a great Part of my Fleet.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

“ This will make a considerable Saving in the Expence
“ of the current Year, and I hope it will give a general
“ Satisfaction to my People, as it is a most sensible Pleasure
“ to me. The proper Estimates shall be laid before you,
“ and I make no doubt but you will grant me the necessary
“ Supplies, and enable me to make good my Engagements
“ with my Allies, in such Manner as shall be most effectual
“ for the publick Service, and most easy to your Fellow
“ Subjects.

“ You will see, by the Accounts that will be laid before
“ you, the State, Produce, and Application of the Sinking
“ Fund, as far as hath been hitherto directed by Act of
“ Parliament ; and you will not fail to take into your Con-
“ sideration the farther Disposition of the growing Produce :
“ You are the best Judges, whether the Circumstances of the
“ Sinking Fund, and of the National Debt, will as yet ad-
“ mit of giving Ease, where the Duties are most grievous.
“ I have the greatest Regard for the Sinking Fund, and
“ look with Compassion upon the Hardships of the poor Ar-
“ tificers and Manufacturers. I leave it to your Determi-
“ nation, what may reasonably and with due Caution be
“ done upon this critical Consideration.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ That we may receive the natural Advantages of our
“ present Situation, I must in the strongest Manner recom-
“ mend to you a perfect Unanimity among yourselves ; such
“ as may entirely defeat the Hopes of our Enemies both at
“ Home and Abroad : The groundless Insinuations, Cavils,
“ and

“ and Clamours of some few ill designing Persons, to shake
 “ the Steadiness of those Powers who are already my Allies,
 “ or to hinder others from becoming so, will, by your
 “ Unanimity, be render'd ineffectual ; and I desire that the
 “ Affections of my People may be the Strength of my Go-
 “ vernment, as their Interest has always been the Rule of
 “ my Actions and the Object of my Wishes.”

Anno 3. Geo. II.
 1729-30.

Mr Speaker having reported his Majesty's Speech, a Motion was made for an Address of Thanks, which was agreed to ; and a Committee was appointed to draw up the same.

January 15. The House presented their Address to his Majesty, as follows :

Most gracious Sovereign,

WE your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal Subjects, the Commons of Great-Britain in Parliament assembled, return your Majesty our most humble Thanks for your most gracious Speech from the Throne.

The Commons Address of Thanks.

We cannot omit taking this first Opportunity to congratulate your Majesty upon your happy Return into these Kingdoms : The just and prudent Administration of the Government during your Majesty's Absence by the Queen your Royal Consort, ruling by your Authority, and governing by your Example, could alone compensate for the want of your Royal Presence and auspicious Influence among us.

The welcome News of your Majesty's having concluded an absolute Peace with the Crown of Spain, effected by a perfect Union, Harmony and Fidelity between your Majesty and your Allies, fill'd the Hearts of all your good People with inexpressible Joy and Satisfaction ; and we should be wanting in Duty to your Majesty, in Justice to ourselves, and not answer the Expectations of those we represent, if we did not approach your Majesty upon this happy Occasion with Hearts full of Duty and Gratitude, and with the strongest Acknowledgments of your Majesty's Goodness, Wisdom, and Resolution ; your Wisdom and Resolution, in not suffering yourself to be diverted by any false and malicious Clamours and Insinuations, from steadily pursuing the great and desirable Work of giving Peace to your People ; your Goodness in consulting the immediate Interests of these your Kingdoms, preferable to all other Considerations, and at the Hazard of all other Events.

This must convince the World of your Majesty's paternal Care and tender Regard for your British Dominions, when we see all former Treaties made in Favour of our Trade and Commerce, and for the Security of the Rights,
 “ Privileges,

Anno 3. Geo. II.
1729-30.

‘ Privileges, and Possessions belonging to your Majesty re-
‘ new’d and confirm’d; when we see the Crown of Spain
‘ under new and fresh Obligations to your Majesty, not only
‘ to permit to your Subjects a free and uninterrupted Exer-
‘ cise of their Trade and Commerce for the future, but to
‘ make just and ample Restitution and Reparation for all for-
‘ mer unlawful Seizures and Depredations.

‘ The Extension of former Engagements, without any ma-
‘ terial Alterations in the principal Articles from the Pur-
‘ port and Intentions of former Treaties, in order to obtain
‘ these great and truly valuable Advantages, without one
‘ Concession made to the Prejudice of your Majesty or your
‘ Subjects, is a Consideration, that to reject, had been losing
‘ the fairest Opportunity to recover the ancient Freedom and
‘ Liberty of Trade and Commerce to these Kingdoms; and
‘ not faithfully to fulfil and execute what is stipulated on
‘ your Majesty’s part to secure a reciprocal Performance from
‘ your Majesty’s Allies, of the Engagements they have en-
‘ ter’d into, would be abandoning the particular Interests and
‘ Properties of your Majesty’s trading Subjects; and to ex-
‘ pose the Trade and Commerce of this Nation to all the
‘ Hazards and Uncertainties, which they have so long labour’d
‘ under.

‘ These Blessings, secured to us, will sufficiently compen-
‘ sate all Inconveniencies that can attend the Performance
‘ of your Majesty’s Engagements: And as it is justly to be
‘ presumed, that a general Pacification and Tranquility in
‘ Europe will be the Consequence of the present Treaty,
‘ the Prospect of seeing this soon compleat and perfected
‘ adds greatly to our Satisfaction.

‘ But if, contrary to Expectation, and in Resentment to
‘ your Majesty’s just and prudent Measures, any new Troubles
‘ should be rais’d in Europe, to oppose or disappoint the
‘ Execution of the present Engagements, we think ourselves
‘ obliged by the strongest Ties of Duty, Affection, and Gra-
‘ titude, to assure your Majesty, that we will stand by and
‘ support your Majesty against all Insults and Indignities that
‘ shall be offer’d to your Majesty, and that we will enable
‘ you to make good your Engagements with your Allies.

‘ The immediate Reduction of so considerable a Part of
‘ your Forces by Sea and Land, upon the first Notice of the
‘ Confirmation of the Peace, is another Instance of your
‘ Majesty’s Care and Attention to the Ease and Welfare of
‘ your People; and the recommending to our Consideration
‘ the State of the Sinking Fund, in so gracious and conde-
‘ scending a Manner, obliges us to proceed with all possible
‘ Caution and Prudence in an Affair of that Nicety and
‘ Importance, where the earliest Discharge of the National
‘ Debt

‘ Debt on one Hand, and the Hardships of the poor Artificers and Manufacturers on the other, require the greatest Regard, and deserve the most mature Deliberation.

Anno 3. Geo. II.

1729-30.

‘ From a due Sense of these many Proofs of your Majesty’s unwearied Endeavours to consult the Happiness of your People, we think ourselves obliged to assure your Majesty, that this House will, by the best and most easy Methods, effectually raise the necessary Supplies for the Service of the current Year ; and by a proper Zeal and Concern for the Honour of your Majesty, the publick Tranquility, and the Good of your People, defeat the vain Expectations of such ill-designing Persons, who may flatter themselves with the Hopes of being able, by groundless Insinuations, Cavils, and Clamours, to shake the Steadiness of those Powers who are already Allies to your Majesty, or to hinder others from becoming so.’

To the above Address, his Majesty gave this Answer.

Gentlemen,

“ I Return you my Thanks for this very affectionate and loyal Address. The Assurances you have given me, and the Support of my Parliament in enabling me to make good my Engagements with my Allies, will, I promise myself, greatly contribute towards settling the general Pacification of Europe.

The King’s Answer thereto.

“ You may be assured, that the Confidence you repose in me shall never be made use of, but for preserving the publick Tranquility, for maintaining the Rights and Interests of my People, and in Vindication of my Honour and Dignity.”

Jan. 28. The Commons, in a Grand Committee on the Supply, took into Consideration the Charge of the Land-Forces for the Service of the Year 1730, and Mr Henry Pelham * mov’d, That the Number of effective Men for Guards and Garrisons in Great Britain, Jersey and Guernsey, with 1850 Invalids and 555 Men, for the six Independent Companies in the Highlands, be 17,709 Men, Commission and Non-Commission Officers included. This Motion was seconded by Sir William Yonge, but was oppos’d by Mr Polteney, and Lord Morpeth, who were for reducing the Number to 12,000 Men, Mr Pelham in Support of his Motion, having urg’d, ‘ That every Reduction, which hath been made within these sixteen Years, has been attended with some ill Consequence or other, which soon after forc’d us upon a

Debate concerning the Number of Land-Forces.

Mr H. Pelham.

Sir W. Yonge.

Mr W. Polteney.
Lord Morpeth.

more

Anno 3. Gen. II.
1729-30.

Mr Shippen,

more considerable Expence; and that it would be necessary to continue that Number, if they consulted the Preservation of the Government itself; Mr Shippen hereupon stood up, and spoke as follows;

Mr Speaker,

‘ After the Debates we have had on this Subject for many Years successively, it is hardly possible to offer any Thing new; and Repetition, if I may judge by myself, is as disagreeable to those that speak, as it can be to those that hear. However, a total Silence at this time would misbecome me, who too often trouble you on Occasions of less Importance, when you are going to put a Question, that tends directly towards the Establishment of an Army in Great Britain, which I hope will never be so far Germanized, as tamely to submit to a Military Government.

‘ I will not insinuate, that the honourable Person, who made the Motion, did it rather to comply with the Obligations of his Office, from whence the Army-Estimates are brought into the House, than out of any Conviction that the Troops demanded are necessary for the Service of the Year, because he declares otherwise: And as we are all supposed to act here without Influence, so we must not suspect, that he ever countenanced those almost irresistible Jobbs, which my new Ally on the Floor [*Mr W. P. **] owns attended the War-Office in his Time, and which he believes now attend all Offices concerned in the Publick Expences. But I will insist, that this Motion is a flat Negative to the Address, for which he voted the first Day of the Session; and it plainly implies a Distrust of the Validity of the Treaty of Seville, which he then assured us would immediately produce all the Blessings of an absolute Peace, and deliver us not only from the Apprehensions, but from the Inconveniencies, of a War. Now he is pleased to change his Language, and endeavour to persuade us, that we ought not to make any Reduction of our Land Forces; because our Circumstances have been such for sixteen Years past, that, whenever any Reduction has been made, something happened which soon occasioned an Increase of Troops and Expences.

‘ If we were to allow him this last Sort of Reasoning, in opposition to his former, it would prove too much; it would prove, that we have no other Cause to rejoice at the late Reduction, for which we have humbly thank’d his Majesty, than that it was so small; it would prove, that, notwithstanding our famous and successful Negotiations, we are like to remain in the same Condition, and

under

* Secretary at War from Sept. 27, 1714, to April 10, 1717.

under the same Difficulties, we have been for sixteen Years together. But to pass over these Remarks, the late Reduction was very fallacious, and looked as if those, who had the Direction of it, were not heartily inclined to get rid of our growing military Power, or to return to the free Exercise of our Civil Government. Nay, we have just heard it laid down for Doctrine, that tho' our Government is not military, tho' an Army is not Part of our Constitution, yet it will be necessary to continue our present Army of near 18,000 Men for many Years longer, on account of the Government's consulting its own Preservation.

Anno 3. Geo. II.

1729-30.

' Sir, the Principle of Self-Preservation will last as long as Persons and Governments themselves subsist, and is an Argument that may be constantly renewed; that may be urged *ad infinitum*. But I am so far from admitting this Argument in its full Extent, that I cannot admit it in any Degree, as applied to the present Question. For it does not appear to me, that we can have Occasion, even this Year, for all the Troops demanded, considering the glorious Scene of Affairs, which the honourable Gentleman says is opened to us, and to all Europe: They are not necessary, I suppose, to awe Spain into a firm Adherence to its own Treaty: They are not necessary, to force the Emperor into an immediate Accession: Nor are they, in any sort, necessary, for the Safety of his Majesty's Person and Government.

' Force and Violence are the Resort of Usurpers and Tyrants only.—I perceive some Gentlemen take Offence at my Words, and therefore, that they may not be misconstrued, I will repeat them. — I assert then, it is a grounded Maxim in Civil Science, that Force and Violence are the Resort of Usurpers and Tyrants only; because they are, with good Reason, distrustful of the People, whom they oppress; and because they have no other Security for the Continuance of their unlawful and unnatural Dominion, than what depends entirely on the Strength of their Armies.

' But it is the peculiar Happiness and Glory of Great Britain to be blest'd with a Prince, who wants no such Support; who reigns absolute in the Hearts of his Subjects; who prefers their Ease and Interest to the Lustre and Grandeur of his Crown; who sets them a Pattern of Prudence and Wisdom; whose Royal Goodness would be offended with continuing any Tax, or any Burthen upon them, but what is requisite to supply the immediate Occasions and Necessities of his Government.

' For these Reasons, Sir, I cannot assent to the Question. But, before I conclude, give me leave to say, there is an

Anno 3. Geo. II.
1729-30.

Article in the Estimate, under your Consideration, which I readily allow, in the midst of all my Frugality ; tho' I must at the same Time own, with those Gentlemen who dispute it, that it is a new *Item*, and an additional Article to the Estimate of the last Year, I mean the Salary of 200*l.* for the Physician of the Tower : For no Person, who shall hereafter have the Misfortune to be confined there, on any Account whatsoever, should want proper Assistance in case of Sickneps. Members of this House have been frequently sent thither, and for very different Reasons. Some for speaking freely, [*See Vol. I. p. 161.*] others for acting corruptly. Now, as it is uncertain of what Denomination the Member, or any other Gentleman may be, who shall next be committed to that State-Prison, let us give an Instance of our general Compassion, and not grudge so trifling a Sum for so charitable a Purpose.'

After this the Question being put on Mr Pelham's Motion, it was carried in the Affirmative ; and it was farther resolv'd, That the Sum of 723,032 *l.* be granted for the Charge of the said 17,709 Men.

Debate concerning
a Bill to prohibit
any Persons in
Great Britain from
lending Money to
any foreign Prince,
without Licence
from the King.

Feb. 24. A Bill, *To prevent any Persons, his Majesty's Subjects, or residing within this Kingdom ; to advance any Sum of Money to any Foreign Prince, State, or Potentate, without having obtained Licence from his Majesty, under his Privy Seal, or some greater Authority,* was read a second Time, in which, *inter alia*, was the following Clause, viz.
' That the King be empower'd by Proclamation, which shall
' take Place within a limited Time, to prohibit all such
' Loans of Money, Jewels or Bullion ; and this Prohibition
' to continue a limited Time, under limited Forfeitures and
' Penalties, unless dispens'd with by the Crown ; that the
' Attorney General be empower'd by English Bill in the
' Court of Exchequer, to compel the effectual Discovery on
' Oath of any such Loans, and that in Default of an Answer
' to any such Bill, the Court shall decree a limited Sum
' against the Defendant, refusing to answer. *Provided*
' that this Act do not extend to prohibit any Subscriptions
' to the Publick Funds or Trading Companies of Foreign
' Kingdoms.'

Sir R. Walpole.

Hereupon Sir Robert Walpole stood up, and endeavour'd to shew that such a Bill was always right and necessary ; that all possible Care had been taken in drawing this Bill to obviate every Objection, to avoid every Inconvenience ; that as to any Exception which Gentlemen possibly might make to the Frame of it as it now stands, he conceived they would properly come under Consideration when the Bill was committed ; that any reasonable Alterations might be regularly offered

offered and agreed to in such a Committee ; and therefore he mov'd, ' That the Bill might be committed to a Committee of the whole House, on the 4th of March.' But this was oppos'd by Mr Daniel Pulteney, who declar'd, ' That this being the second Time of reading this Bill, he thought it was proper to give his Opinion ; and that after having consider'd it fully, he neither approved it on the whole or in any part, for it would entirely prove ineffectual to all the Purposes propos'd ; it could not possibly answer good Ends, and it would certainly produce very bad ones ; he thought it would be a Restraint upon Commerce, a Restraint of a dangerous Nature ; he had heard all the Merchants in general complain of its Tendency, and he wish'd they might not feel it in a very grievous Manner : That by denying this Liberty to all the People of England, by restraining all Loans or Assistance of Money to Princes and Powers abroad, we made Holland the Market of Europe and the Mart of Money to the Nations of the Continent : That this was unjust and imprudent in us, when our Subjects had Money to trade with as well as their Neighbours ; when his Majesty's Subjects might make an Advantage even of his very Enemies, were it not for this ill judged Prohibition : That our Neighbours the Dutch would rejoice at such a Procedure ; they would certainly make this most fortunate Accident as beneficial as it could be to their People : That the contrary could not be expected, for not only the late Wars of Europe evince that the greatest of Dangers, the most formidable Enemies, could not be so terrifying as to prevent them from lending their Money to their private Advantage ; but that even in their ancient War with Spain, a War wherein they were treated not only as Enemies but Rebels, and had they been conquer'd, they must have been Slaves to the Victor, they must have submitted to Popery and Chains ; yet their Merchants assisted the Spaniards, even in that most hazardous Juncture, with Money, with Arms and Ammunition ; nor could we suppose they would scruple to furnish the Emperor also with the very same Assistance, whenever he ask'd it, as had always been practis'd since the first Foundation of that wise Republick.' He added, ' That this Bill was a general Prohibition, extending to all Princes, States, or Potentates whatever : That thus we were wholly disabled to assist the best Allies, the truest Friends, and those who really well deserved our Aid : That he was credibly informed, that the King of Portugal, to whom we could have no Exception, very frequently borrow'd Money of our Merchants residing within his Dominions ; and that it could not be denied him, without disabling a Prince on whose Favour our Commerce depends, nay, exposing it to his severest Displeasure : That should a

Anno 3. Geo. II.
1729-30.

Mr D. Pulteney;

Anno 3. Geo. II.
1727-30.

Proclamation issue here, the British Subjects who reside in Portugal, or more remote Dominions, may contract for Loans, tho' liable to Penalties, of which they may be wholly unapprized: That he had therefore the most powerful Motives to throw out the Bill, because it prevented the People of England from aiding their Friends and Allies; but what was more it might involve many innocent Persons in unavoidable Guilt, and expose them to the heavy Pains of unknown Crimes. But his principal Objection to this Bill was the Power of Licensing reserved thereby to the Crown: That he believed it a Power the King would apply to the Welfare and Advantage of the People, therefore he was not against it, as a Power in the Hands of the King; but he knew it would be influenced by an Administration; that whenever these Licences issued, it must be thro' the Hands of the Ministers; and whilst such a Prohibition continued, he knew not but the Licensing-Trade might become a new Branch of their Business, and a managing Minister might make it, by tolerable Husbandry, an Article of 20, 30, or 40,000 l. a Year; and that therefore they might easily see it was not for the Honour of the King, or the Interest of his Subjects, that any such Bill was contriv'd, but that it was wholly design'd for creating of profitable Jobbs, and making a Market of the Merchants. That he opposed this Bill, because it made the Court of Exchequer a Court of Inquisition: That it gave new, great, and extraordinary Powers to the Crown, already arm'd, in his Opinion, with weighty and terrible Authority: That whilst it restrained our Merchants from assisting the Princes and Powers of Europe, it permitted our Stock-Jobbers to trade in their Funds without any Interruption: That he knew for whose Benefit, this Complaisance was design'd, but that Jobbing Abroad, in the Stocks of Foreign Nations, was what we should least encourage, and what we ought most to prohibit; for we have suffer'd severely by that Means already, and our Ministry would never give us Relief or Assistance; and thus our People, when they trusted their Money with our faithful Allies the French, in the Affair of the Mississippi, were ruin'd and betray'd by their Edicts of State, and had nothing but Paper for Specie: That notwithstanding this most shameful Treachery, this great Injustice and Violation of the Laws of Nations, the Ministry never interposed with the least good Office for their suffering Fellow-Subjects, who have irrecoverably lost the Money they unhappily advanc'd in those fatal, those faithless Schemes.

Sir R. Walpole.

Mr Pulteney having done speaking, Sir Robert Walpole replied, ' That he thought those Objections more proper for the Consideration of the House, in a Committee of the whole

whole House, where every Paragraph would be debated ; where every Member might reply as often as Occasion required, and fully pursue the Inquiry : 'That he did not desire this Bill for any Advantage to himself, for any Accession of extraordinary Powers to the Crown, or for any Thing else, but the pressing Occasion, the apparent Necessity of this important Conjunction : That if this Bill was committed, he would heartily concur in every Amendment that could be with Reason propos'd : That he would freely consent the Committee should make it a temporary Law, should enact it for a short Duration, and limit the Continuance for a very small Space of Time : That the honourable Member, who spoke last, had departed from the Question before them ; had opened a Charge against France, and had brought in the old Mississippi Affair, in debating a particular Bill on an Argument about lending Money : That he thought it a weak Reasoning, that we should not do ourselves Justice in this Point, because that our Neighbours had treated us ill in another ; and because that the French had not yielded us all we could wish for, that therefore the Parliament should not in this Case do all that they ought.' He added, 'Why was not this Matter laid open in the Committee on the State of the Nation, but that this was an Objection indeed to the French, like all other Complaints against France ; it was raised on occasion of proper Precautions to prevent a War with the Emperor : That he was fully convinc'd, this Bill was a Matter of great Importance and Necessity : That he had been so tender in this Argument, that he had not even said what he was authoriz'd to say ; he had meant no Aspersions or Reflections on any Gentlemen ; he was willing that this and all other Debates should be manag'd with Decency and Candour : But since that these Things had thus passed, he was thereby provok'd to declare, what he knew, what he had the King's Leave to declare, and what would effectually silence the Debate ; that he was very much inclin'd to say it, he would say it, if the Gentlemen required it ; [*Here several Members call'd out for this Affair*] he would say it before he sat down : This Bill was not drawn or promoted from any other View than its great Necessity, its being now absolutely expedient to the Peace of Europe, and the general Repose of Mankind ; for he could say it, he had the King's Leave to declare it ; viz. That there was at this Time a Subscription transacted for the Service of the Emperor, and Money was raising for his Use, no less than the Sum of 400,000 l.' He added, 'That this Bill could not possibly be a Restraint upon Trade, or a Grievance to the Merchants in any one lawful Point of Commerce : That the View of this Bill having been to prohibit such Loans and Assistance to the Emperor, who could not match his Armies,

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or cloath his Troops without Supplies of Money, it was not just or reasonable, he should have Assistance from us ; from that Nation against which he was forming a War, and projecting future Disturbances ; could the Emperor maintain the Soldiers he had in his Troops, and the numerous Forces he quarter'd upon his own People ; or could he bring them into the Field, without Treasure to pay the Expence ; and now when, by Treaties with Spain, that Prince was deprived of those Subsidies and that Assistance, which once made him dangerous to us ; when thus he is happily cut off from all Communications with those Countries, from whence his Treasure used to flow, shall the People of England assist him themselves with Supplies ? Shall they arm an Enemy with Strength, which his best Ally denies ? And the British Merchants lend their Money to a Prince against the British Nation ? If this should be done in the Time of Hostilities, and after the Commencement of a War, it would be High Treason by Law ; for to aid, abet, or assist a Foreign Power at War with the King, is expressly declared in the Statute of High Treason : And shall the Merchants be allow'd to enable a Prince to become our Enemy, whom it is even High Treason to aid when an Enemy ? shall it be allow'd with Impunity to aid the Emperor to march his Troops and yet open Rebellion to assist the Emperor whilst those Troops were marching ? Must the Quiet of the whole World be a Victim to the Avarice of Men, who would make an inglorious Advantage of their Money ? Must Men be indulged in those Dealings which bear such Analogy even to High Treason, only for the Sake of Self-Interest ? He added, ' It was Compassion and Humanity, to ignorant unwary Men, which led him to bring in this Bill ; for in case of a War with the Emperor, Merchants might transact with his Imperial Majesty for Loans before it broke out, and when their Second Payments became due, it would be within the Statute should they make them good ; so that such a Proclamation would warn them of approaching Dangers : It would give them due Notice of a Rupture, and prevent them incurring the unforeseen Pains of Capital Crimes, by coveting such a Premium and Interest.' He own'd, ' That many Difficulties had occur'd to him, and the Gentlemen order'd to bring in this Bill : That he was sorry to be sensible, that it could not be so effectual as many might wish, and himself had most heartily desired ; but was this an Argument to a House of Commons against a Bill for such important Ends, that because they could not do all that they would, therefore they must not do all that they could ? if their Power could not wholly prevent those Practices, must they not exert the utmost of their Power ? if they had not

an absolute Redress for the Evil, must they not find out all possible Redress? and because they could not shut up all the Avenues of Assistance, therefore must they leave all open?' He added, 'That it was no Objection to the Bill before them, that any Prince, State, or Potentate, was equally intended with the Emperor; for that the End of it was to prevent a War with that Prince, and to name him in this Case distinct from all others would amount to a full Declaration of War; besides, one Prince might borrow Money for another, and elude the Import of the Law: That as to the King of Portugal, or any other Prince in Alliance with the Crown of Great-Britain, his Majesty would readily grant his Allowance for Loans to so good an Ally: That however, this Law would not have an Effect, but in case of apparent Necessity; if the Emperor gave his Majesty Reason to oppose his Intentions, it might produce a future Proclamation; yet this was eventual, it might be, or it might not be: And if it ever should happen, no Subjects of Britain, no Merchants Abroad could offend through Ignorance of such a Proclamation; for the Bill was drawn with a Blank, to be fill'd with a proper Limitation of Time, before the Law should take Place, or the Prohibition hold good; and the Limitation might be very large and extensive, that Merchants Abroad might be duly inform'd of the Terms which the Law had enjoin'd.' He said, 'That it was the proper Policy of Nations, the reasonable Authority vested in the Councils of a Country, to use such Precautions and lay such Prohibitions, on an Appearance of Danger, although not discern'd by the People: That the Reason of this was, because they had early and secret Intelligence not proper for the Publick View when immediatly receiv'd, yet highly expedient to be observ'd: That as to the Indulgence allow'd to those Persons who traded in the Funds Abroad, or trusted their Money in Foreign Companies, it was reasonable and proper, because many Persons thought those a good Security for their Fortunes: That many of the British Merchants in other Countries had no better Employment for Cash in their Hands; and it would occasion great Confusion to include those Cases in this Prohibition, neither indeed did they any ways relate to this Case; for tho' Money might be lent to the Emperor by private Persons, he would never have Aids from the Publick Companies Abroad.' He own'd, 'That he was not so conversant in the Laws as some Gentlemen were, who could justly support this Bill in its Provision for a proper Discovery of Evidence by Precedents; he was a Stranger to that; but he himself remember'd the Act to prevent the Subjects of Great-Britain from trading in the Ostend Company, and that there the same Method of Discovery was provided; and should not the Publick detect such a criminal Commerce with

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a powerful and national Enemy, when they were allow'd it against a little interloping Company? It was far from setting up a Court of Inquisition, it was far from laying Hardships or Severities on any Man; but it was for the Prevention of fraudulent Dealings and conceal'd Transactions; and it involv'd the Party in no other Penalty than one, which he could not incur but thro' conscious Guilt, which he might easily avoid by purging himself of the Crime; and that this Penalty was still in the Judgment of the House to be limited by their Authority, having no other End than to be such a Tax upon Loans, as might make it unprofitable to advance them for the highest Premiums or Interest.' He also observ'd, 'That the Proclamation provided in the Bill, was the same as by Law had been usual in the case of Quarentine in the Apprehensions of a Pestilence, and as a Prevention of any contagious Distempers; he thought it a reasonable Remedy on all such Appearances of Danger; it would not be made use of unless such Grievances happen'd; and if they did happen, he thought they deserv'd a Redress: He therefore insisted on committing this Bill, as highly expedient and necessary.'

Mr Wortley Montague.

Sir Robert Walpole having ended, Mr Wortley Montague said, 'That he had a Point of Order to debate: That that honourable Member had brought in the Name of the King to influence their Considerations contrary to a standing Rule of the House: And that it was never allow'd that the Name of the King should ever be used upon any Occasion to awe their Proceedings, or to over-bear their Debates: That if that honourable Member had been properly careful of his Majesty's Honour, he would not have mention'd his Name at that Rate; he would have inform'd them of the Evidence they had, and regularly brought it before them in the present Inquiry: That whatever that Evidence might be, he suppos'd it must come from Foreign Ministers, and he thought the House ought to have it open'd in a proper Parliamentary Way.' He added, 'That his Opinion was against the Bill, for he thought it restrain'd our Commerce, and we might as well prohibit all Commerce.'

Sir R. Walpole.

To this Sir Robert Walpole replied, 'That the Manner of his Declaration had been very much mistaken, in asserting that what he had said was Unparliamentary, for he well knew and duly observ'd the Orders of the House: That he had not brought in the Name of the King to influence Gentlemen, or to over-bear the Debates: That he had mention'd the positive Assurances which were receiv'd, not as a Message from the King, but by his Majesty's Leave; not by his Command, but only by his Permission; that the Station he was in oblig'd him to ask that Permission, because that by his Oath he was oblig'd to keep the King's Council secret, and therefore he ask'd this Allowance

ance from his Majesty Yesterday Morning, apprehending the Debate of this Day would require him to mention it, and he had offer'd it to prove the Importance of the Bill now before them.

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Mr Gould,

Mr Gould said, 'He was a Merchant himself; that he could make it appear to the House, the Emperor's Agents had been in Change-Alley; that he knew a particular Jew, who had been apply'd to for 30,000 l. and others for very large Sums, but refused to advance them, 'as fearing it would draw the Displeasure of the Government upon them: That he thought the Bill a good Bill, and all reasonable Licences might be obtain'd, whenever they might answer an innocent Purpose; nay, he thought they ought to be granted when apply'd for, without any Charge to the Merchants;' which Sir Robert Walpole agreed to. Hereupon Mr. Walter Plomer said, 'That he would not oppose the Design of this Bill; he would never oppose whatever might strengthen his Majesty's Hands, he never did nor ever would appear in any such Cause: But if this must be done, why was it to be effected by a Proclamation? why were the Ministry to be Judges in this Case? let the House determine the Fitness of the Affair, let them enact the Prohibition, let them alone have the absolute Direction, and then he had nothing to offer against such a Bill.' To this Mr Henry Pelham reply'd, 'That that Gentleman misunderstood them, if he imagin'd that he or the Persons employ'd to prepare and bring in that Bill, intended to make any Ministers Judges where the House might much better decide; but it was a Tenderness to the People, that made them provide a Proclamation; they hoped this Affair might even yet be adjusted without a Prohibition; but if the House would not have it eventual, if they would have it immediately, he should not stand in Opposition to any such Demand.'

Mr W. Plomer,

Mr H. Pelham,

'Then Mr Barnard declared himself against the Bill. He said, 'That he thought it a Restraint upon Commerce, that could not be justify'd, and such Restraints had ever been prejudicial to ourselves; That he remember'd a Bill of this Sort against Sweden, to prohibit all Commerce with that Kingdom, [See Vol. I. p. 179] yet the Consequence was, that we were forced to enable our Merchants to carry it on in Dutch Bottoms, which render'd the Prohibition useless, as well as burthensome, before we took it off: That he thought if the Dutch could assist their Enemies the Spaniards in a War, where Rebellion was the Quarrel, and the Crown of Spain claimed all the People as its natural born Subjects, they would surely lend Money to the Emperor when he apply'd for Assistance. He added, 'That the Argument used about Merchants incurring High Treason for their Second Payments was very absurd, for no Men in the World would

Mr Barnard,

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contract for Loans on such Terms or make them good. 'He insisted,' That they should name the Emperor expressly, and not make a great Prohibition to affect the whole World as if we were at War with all. He said, 'That however the Practice might obtain of Licensing Loans to his Majesty of Portugal, or to any of our good Allies, that this would be of no Service to our Merchants, who would lose the Advantage of lending their Money, because other Nations could furnish such Loans with more Readiness ; and whilst ours were applying for Permissions to the Crown, the others would advance such Assistances in the mean Time, and supplant our People in all their Money-Dealings. He likewise declared against making the Court of Exchequer a Court of Inquisition ; he conceived it unknown to the Laws ; nay, odious to the Constitution, that Men should be obliged to accuse themselves, and thereby incur the worst of Penalties ; he knew not what Precedents might be furnish'd ; he believ'd that they could easily find Precedents for any Thing : But he thought the Liberties of his Country much more weighty with him than any Precedents whatever ; and he would never consent to a Bill, which he thought a Violation of our Fundamental Laws, a Breach of our dearest Liberties, and a very terrible Hardship on Mankind.' To this Sir Philip Yorke said, 'That himself and the Gentlemen honoured by the House with their Commands to bring in the Bill, had considered the Dutch and the English Merchants as two different Resorts, where the Emperor might apply for Assistance ; that if one Shop was shut up, he had one the less to make use of ; and even the other, if our true and faithful Ally, and govern'd by Reason and right Policy, not under extraordinary Influence, might also be prevailed on to stop this Assistance of Money, and yield a private Interest to the common Cause of Europe ; he thought they were very well justify'd in drawing this Bill, not only from Reason and the Fitness of Things, but from the Common Law of the Kingdom ; That the King had a lawful Prerogative to recall his Subjects by Proclamation from the Service of Foreign States, and should he not also have Power to prohibit them from lending their Money, which might be more useful and dangerous than even the Service of their Persons : That in Ireland the Parliament had made it High Treason, to enlist Men for Foreign Service without Licence obtained from the Crown ; and surely a Restraint upon Money, the Sinews of War, was highly expedient any where ; That this Law was intended only as a temporary Restraint, a present Remedy apply'd to an approaching Evil, and not to be establish'd in Perpetuity.' He observed, 'That the Clause for discovering Evidence, by English Bill in the Court of Exchequer, was the only Men-
tioned

Sir P. Yorke.

thod to make this Law effectual ; for such a Tranfaction, as lending of Money in this Manner, would always be done in a very concealed, a very clandestine Way : That if they did not pass this Clause, they might justly throw out the whole Bill, for there would be no Evidence ever to support its Design : That many such Laws had provided such Methods of Discovery ; that memorable Law, among others, which punish'd the South-Sea Directors, made it Felony to refuse answering or to demur to a Bill for Discovery of Concealments ; and yet if they did discover a Concealment, the very Answer was good in Evidence against them, and the Concealment was Felony ; but here was a limited Sum, and no other Penalty could be the Consequence, attending conscious Guilt upon such a Bill of Discovery : That by the Construction of a Court of Equity, such a Bill of Discovery would have been allow'd, if this Clause had not been inserted : That the Barons of the Exchequer had maintain'd the Legality of Suits, to discover Frauds and Misdemeanors relating to the Revenue ; nor could they deny that this was as just by Parity of Reasoning ; tho' if the House should throw out this Clause, it might make the Judges unwilling to supply it by such a Construction ; and therefore he hoped they would not throw it out. Hereupon Sir William Wyndham said, ' That he hoped when this Bill was committed they would make it a reasonable Bill : That the honourable Member, who spoke last, had mentioned a possible Case, that the Dutch would shut up their Shop to the Emperor ; and such a bare Possibility it was, that no Man could think it a common Probability : That in the late Wars with France, we drew them into a Bargain, and paid them a Price to discontinue their Trade with the French, which they did for one Year only, but took our Money for two or three more, and when required to follow the Tenor of their Contract, they declared they neither could nor would do any such Thing : That therefore we could not imagine the Dutch would refuse to lend their Money to the Emperor now, any more than to trade with the French in the Queen's War : That he looked on all these Restraints upon Liberty, as unjustifiable Powers in the Hands of a Ministry : And that to argue from any Suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act, to the Suspension of Trade, was to argue from one Evil to another : That he was also against the Practice of an English Bill in the Exchequer, to discover Evidence ; That he had heard the South-Sea Act mention'd, but tho' it was a Law, and therefore to be tenderly us'd, he was no more convinc'd of the Justice of that than he was of this : And that he found from some Passages in this Debate, that because we stood in fear of a War with the Emperor, therefore the Nation must bear whatever the French should impose.

Sir W. Wyndham.

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Mr Danvers.

Mr Danvers said, 'That this was a Bill of Terrors; and that tho' a temporal Act, it would be an eternal Yoke on them and their Fellow Subjects: That since the honourable Member in the Administration had open'd secret Intelligence, they should also know what he knew of this Matter: That the Emperor had deposited Jewels in Holland, as a Security for the Sum of 400,000 l. and that he himself had Money to lend, and he did not know any Cause why he and other People might not make an advantageous Bargain, as well as their Neighbours the Dutch.' To this Mr Fane * Member for Taunton, reply'd, 'That indeed it was a Bill of Terrors, and he hop'd it would prove so to all the King's Enemies, the Foes to the Peace of Great Britain; but that the Terror of our Enemies would be the Delight of our Friends;' and added, 'That that Gentleman was misinform'd, for the Emperor had no Jewels to mortgage, but the Revenues of his Hereditary Countries.

Mr Fane.

Then the Question being put, it was carry'd without any Division, that the said Bill be committed to a Committee of the whole House: It afterwards pass'd into a Law.

May. 15. The King came to the House of Lords, and the Commons attending, his Majesty made the following Speech to both Houses.

King's Speech at
putting an End
to the Third
Session.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

" THE Season of the Year, and the Dispatch you have
" given to the Publick Business, make it proper for me
" to put an End to this Session; and I make no doubt, but
" the Conduct and Behaviour of this Parliament, as it has
" answer'd my Expectations, will be equally satisfactory to
" all my good and faithful Subjects.

" The Support you have given me, in enabling me so
" effectually to make good my Engagements with my Al-
" lies, will, I persuade myself, have the desired Effect; and
" when it shall be seen, that the Allies of the Treaty of Se-
" ville are not only determined, but in a Readiness, to execute
" their mutual Engagements, it is very much to be hoped,
" that a general Pacification will be the happy Consequence
" of this just and powerful Alliance.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

" I give you my Thanks in particular for the Supplies
" you have rais'd for the Service of the current Year. It
" is a great Satisfaction to me, that you have had such a due
" Regard for the Ease of your Fellow-Subjects, whose Wel-
" fare and Prosperity it shall always be my principal Care and
" Study to advance and promote.

My

My Lords and Gentlemen,

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1730.

“ I am very glad, that, for the general Satisfaction, you entered into a particular Consideration of the State of the Nation ; and it is a great Happiness to see, after so many unjust and unreasonable Clamours raised with all possible Art, Industry, and Malice, that, upon mature Deliberation and the most solemn Debates, you were so far from finding any Thing worthy of Blame or Censure, that all Matters which came under your Consideration, met with your Approbation.

“ This must give all Mankind a just Detestation of those Incendiaries, who, from a Spirit of Envy and Discontent, continually labour, by scandalous Libels, to alienate the Affections of my People, and to fill their Minds with groundless Jealousies and unjust Complaints, in Dishonour of me and my Government, and Defiance of the Sense of both Houses of Parliament.

“ But I must rely upon your Prudence, and your Concern for the Peace and Happiness of your Country, to discountenance all such seditious Practices, and to make my People sensible, that these wicked Proceedings can have no other View or End, but to create Confusion and Distraction among us.

Then the Lord Chancellor, by his Majesty's Command, prorogued the Parliament to the 14th of July : They were afterwards farther prorogued to the 21st of January.

The Parliament
prorogued.



SPEECHES and DEBATES

In the FOURTH SESSION of the

First Parliament of King GEORGE II.

ON the 21st of January the King came to the House of Peers, and the Commons attending, his Majesty made the following Speech.

Anno 4. Geo. II.
1730-31.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ YOU cannot but be sensible, that the Measures formerly taken, and the Conclusion of the Treaty of Seville, have prevented and disappointed the dangerous Consequences that were so justly apprehended from the Treaty of Vienna ; and we do not only see that Union dissolv'd, which had alarm'd all Europe, but the Allies of

King's Speech at
opening the Fourth
Session.

“ the

Anno 4. Geo. II.
1730 31.

“ the Treaty of Hanover strengthened by the additional Power
“ of the Crown of Spain.

“ This Situation of Affairs gave us a reasonable Prospect
“ of a general Pacification, and just Hopes of seeing the
“ Conditions of the Treaty of Seville comply'd with, with-
“ out the Necessity of coming to Extremities ; and no En-
“ deavours have been wanting, conformable to my Engage-
“ ments with my Allies, to obtain that happy End. But
“ this desirable Event having been hitherto delay'd, the
“ Treaty of Seville lays an indispensable Obligation upon
“ all the contracting Parties to prepare for the Execution of
“ it ; and we must be in a Readiness to perform our Part,
“ and, by continuing to pursue the proper Measures, con-
“ vince our Allies, that we will faithfully fulfil our En-
“ gagements, and, as far as shall depend upon us, procure
“ the Satisfaction due to them, either by such Means as shall
“ be most eligible, or by such as shall be found absolutely
“ necessary.

“ The present critical Conjunction seems in a very par-
“ ticular Manner to deserve your Attention ; and you need
“ not be told, with what Impatience the Resolutions of this
“ Parliament are every where waited for and expected.

“ I am incapable of attempting to influence your Pro-
“ ceedings by groundless Fears and Apprehensions, and
“ as incapable of amusing you with vain Hopes and Expec-
“ tations ; but as the Transactions, now depending in the
“ several Courts of Europe, are upon the Point of being
“ determin'd, the great Event of Peace or War may be very
“ much affected by your first Resolutions. The Continuance
“ of that Zeal and Vigour, which you have hitherto shewn,
“ in Support of me and my Engagements, must, at this Time,
“ be of the greatest Weight and Importance, both with Re-
“ gard to my Allies, who cannot think their Interest and
“ the Common Cause neglected, before the Conditions of
“ their Treaties are accomplish'd ; and with Regard to those,
“ who may be disposed, before the Season of Action is
“ come, to prevent, by an Accommodation, the fatal Con-
“ sequences of a general Rupture, which they will have
“ little Reason to apprehend, if they find the Allies of Se-
“ ville not prepared to do themselves Justice.

“ The Plan of Operations for the Execution of the Treaty
“ of Seville by Force, in case we shall be driven to that
“ Necessity, is now under Consideration ; and until the Pro-
“ portions of the Confederate Forces, and the proper Dis-
“ positions for employing them, shall be finally adjust'd and
“ agreed upon, it will not be easy to determine how far the
“ Expences, necessary for the Service of the ensuing Year,
“ may

" may, or may not, exceed the Provisions made for the Service of the last Year.

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1730-31.

" In the mean Time, I am persuaded, you will go on to give all possible Dispatch to the publick Business; and if it shall be necessary, I shall not fail to ask the farther Advice and Assistance of my Parliament, according to the Circumstances of publick Affairs, and as soon as any proper Occasion shall require it.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

" I will order the proper Estimates to be prepared and laid before you; and I can make no doubt, but that dutiful Regard which you have always shewn to me and my Honour, and your just Concern for the true Interest of your Country, will induce you to grant me the necessary Supplies, and enable me to make good my Engagements with my Allies, with that Chearfulness and Affection, which becomes a British House of Commons, tender and jealous of the Honour of the Crown, careful and solicitous for the Glory and Prosperity of the Kingdom.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

" The Time draws near, which will admit of no farther Delays. If the Tranquility of Europe can be settled without the Effusion of Blood, or the Expence of publick Treasure, that Situation will certainly be most happy and desirable: But if that Blessing cannot be obtain'd, Honour, Justice, and the sacred Faith due to solemn Treaties, will call upon us to exert ourselves, in procuring by Force what cannot be had upon just and reasonable Terms."

The Commons being return'd to their House, Mr Speaker reported his Majesty's Speech, and thereupon a Motion was made for an Address of Thanks; and to acknowledge his Majesty's Goodness in endeavouring to have the Conditions of the Treaty of Seville fulfilled and executed, in such Manner as might best secure a general Pacification, and be conformable to his Engagements with his Allies; to declare their entire Confidence in his Majesty's Care and Concern for the Honour and Interests of his People; and their perfect Reliance upon his Wisdom and Justice, in doing every Thing that shall depend upon him, to procure the Satisfaction to his Allies, by such Means as shall be most desirable, or absolutely necessary; to express their firm Resolution to continue their utmost Zeal and Vigour, in Support of his Majesty and his Engagements; and to assure his Majesty, that they would give all possible Dispatch to the Publick Business, as it should from Time to Time be brought before them; and that from a dutiful Regard to his Majesty's Honour and Dignity, and a just Concern for the true Interest of their Country, which
they

Motion for an Address of Thanks.

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they should always look upon as indispensable and inseparable Obligations, they would grant to his Majesty such Supplies as should be necessary for the Service of the ensuing Year ; and effectually enable his Majesty to make good his Engagements with his Allies: And in Return to his Majesty's Goodness, in avoiding to bring any unnecessary Burthens upon his People, to assure his Majesty, that in case the Circumstances of Affairs should oblige his Majesty to ask the farther Advice and Assistance of that House, they would, upon every Occasion, discharge their Duty to his Majesty and those they represent, with that Cheerfulness and Affection which became a British House of Commons, tender and jealous of the Honour of the Crown, and careful and solicitous for the Glory of the Kingdom.'

Debate thereon.

Mr D. Pulteney.
Mr W. Pulteney.
Sir W. Wyndham.

This Motion was oppos'd by Mr Daniel Pulteney, Mr William Pulteney, and Sir William Wyndham, who were for leaving out most Part of the Motion in order to make the Address general ; and for desiring his Majesty to take Care, that no War should be carry'd on in Flanders or upon the Rhine. The Arguments they offer'd in Support of this Amendment were, ' That according to the ancient Parliamentary Method, all Addresses were general : That our Ancestors never were so complaisant as to declare their Sense of Things, 'till the Particulars came regularly before them : That the making of an Address, in Terms so particular as those now propos'd, look'd like an immediate Determination of all the Points likely to come before them, which was in Effect bringing the Business of the whole Session into the Resolves of one Day, and proceeding to determine without either Proofs or Reasons for such Determinations : That the promising now to support his Majesty in all his Engagements, without knowing what those Engagements were, seem'd to be determining, that they would support him before any Reason could be offer'd for such a Determination ; for no other Reason could be offer'd, than that they were all just and reasonable, which no Man could say before he knew what they were : That every Gentleman in that House must remember very well the great Expence of Blood and Treasure, which it had cost this Nation to reduce the exorbitant Power of France, which by the impolitick Measures of former Times had been allow'd to rise to such a Height, that it began to threaten the Liberties of all Europe : That our joining with France, and attacking the Emperor in Flanders, or upon the Rhine, would naturally throw Flanders, and perhaps a Part of Germany, into the Hands of the French ; by which that Monarchy would again become terrible to Europe : That French Alliances, thro' the Unfaithfulness of that People, and their inveterate Malice to us, had always proved destructive to the Interest

Interest and Trade of this Nation; and the Use they had always made of a Correspondence with us, was to encourage arbitrary Designs in our Princes, and that therefore it had generally proved fatal for any King, or Ministry of England, to enter cordially into any Friendship or Correspondence with them: That we might learn, from the Histories of former Times, what Faith could be given to French Promises or French Engagements: That even at present we may see, that they have taken Advantage of the late precarious Situation of the Affairs of Europe, and of the Confidence we have reposed in them, and from thence have presumed to clear and restore the Harbour of Dunkirk, and to inroach upon our Settlements in the West-Indies: That from their present Management we may judge, how much their Friendship is to be depended on; we may see that we must pay dear for any superficial Favours they are pleased to vouchsafe to us, or to any of our Allies: That prosecuting a War either in Flanders or upon the Rhine, in Conjunction with the French, could tend to nothing but the Ruin of that Balance of Power in Europe, which with Difficulty we had at last establish'd, after a ten Years bloody and expensive War, crown'd with many glorious Victories, and attended with a most surprizing Success: That in the present Conjunction of the Affairs of Europe, the Balance of Power by our being beaten might suffer; by our being victorious, it would be entirely destroy'd and lost perhaps for ever.'

Anno 4. Geo. II.
1730-31.

In Answer to this, Sir Robert Walpole, Mr Horatio Walpole, Lord Hervey, and Sir William Yonge, urg'd, ' That the making of the Address in Terms so very general, seem'd to be shewing a Sort of Diffidence in his Majesty's Conduct and Management: That his Majesty, ever since he came to the Throne, had always been so careful of the Interests of the Nation, that no Member of the House had any Reason to harbour the least Suspicion of his Majesty's Measures: That as to the other Part of the Amendment relating to the War in Flanders or upon the Rhine, they agreed, that it was not for the Interest of Europe, that any Part of those Countries should fall into the Hands of the French: That his Majesty would without doubt, according to his wonted Prudence, take all proper Care to prevent any such Consequence: And that the putting such Words into the Address would look like an Encroachment upon the Prerogative of the Crown, and a Directing of the Operations of the future War, if any should happen, which they hoped would not; for that they had good Reason to believe, that the Measures already concerted would produce a Pacification: That the principal Design of the great Alliance form'd against the Emperor was to convince him, that if he did not come into the peaceable

Sir R. Walpole.
Mr H. Walpole.
Lord Hervey.
Sir W. Yonge.

Anno. 4. Geo. II.
1730-31.

Measures propos'd, he would be so powerfully attack'd upon all Sides, that it would be impossible for him to resist; which Design would be entirely frustrated, if they should declare at the Beginning, that he was not to be attack'd in Flanders or upon the Rhine, these being the only two Places in which he was vulnerable; for that in Italy he could make himself superior to the whole Alliance, since he was already in Possession of that Country, and could pour in what Troops he pleas'd by unexpensive Land Marches, whereby he might fill the whole Country with his numerous Body of Horse; which, being Master of the open Country as well as of all the fortify'd Places, he might easily subsist, whilst the Troops sent by the Allies to attack him in Italy, in order to force him to a Compliance with the Terms of the Treaty of Seville, must be both transported, and supported by Sea; it being well known to all who understand any Thing of the Geography of Italy, that it is impossible to force a Passage by Land into that Country, when it is provided with a powerful and well disciplin'd Army to oppose the Entry of an Enemy: That therefore it would be very impolitick to put any such Words into their Address, because it would persuade the Emperor, that the Allies had come to a Resolution not to attack him in Flanders or upon the Rhine, which, by taking away all Grounds of Fear from the Court of Vienna, would make them persevere in refusing to enter into any peaceable Measures; whereby those Alliances, which had been procur'd with so much Expence and Labour, would be render'd fruitless and of no Effect, and consequently a Pacification would become altogether impracticable.

Mr Wyndham.

Then another Amendment was offer'd by Mr Wyndham, Member for Sudbury, viz. That they would support his Majesty's Engagements, so far as they related to the Interest of Great-Britain. This Motion was seconded by Mr Pulteney and those Gentlemen who were for the first Amendment: In Support thereof it was alledg'd, 'That this was agreeable to the Act of Settlement, whereby it is expressly provided; 'That this Nation shall not be obliged to enter into 'a War for the Defence of any Dominions not belonging to 'the Crown of Great-Britain: 'That by Virtue of this Act his Majesty held the Crown of these Realms; and that therefore every Clause and Proviso thereof was to be exactly observ'd, except in so far as they had been or should be alter'd by Parliament; and that therefore the House could not well, by way of Address, go any farther than to say, that they would support his Majesty's Engagements, in so far as they related to the Interest of Great-Britain.'

Lord Hervey,
Sir R. Walpole.

To this it was replied by Lord Hervey, Sir Robert Walpole, and those other Members, who were for the Motion

as at first propos'd, ' That such an Expression in their Address would seem to insinuate, that his Majesty had enter'd into Engagements that did not relate to the Interests of Great-Britain, which would be the greatest Ingratitude that could be imagin'd towards his Majesty, who in all his Measures had never shew'd the least Regard to any Thing but the Interest of Great-Britain, and the Ease and Security of the People thereof, as all those who had the Honour to serve him could testify, and upon their Honour declare : That they hoped every Member of that House was convinc'd, that his Majesty never would enter into any Engagement that was not absolutely necessary for procuring the Happiness and insuring the Safety of his People, and therefore it was quite unnecessary to confine the Words of their Address to such Engagements as related to the Interest of Great-Britain.' Upon this Occasion, Mr Heathcote, Member for Hindon, said, ' That with Respect to the Prerogative, he did not think, that the giving of Advice to his Majesty could ever be call'd an interfering with the Prerogative of the Crown, since it was the proper Business of Parliament, which was the King's great Council, to advise the Crown in all Matters of Importance ; and it was what many Parliaments had done, and what they were always obliged to do : That the acting against the Emperor, in Flanders or upon the Rhine, was absolutely destructive to the Interest of England, and inconsistent with that Political Maxim of maintaining a Balance of Power in Europe, as had been acknowledg'd by all the Gentlemen who had spoke in the Debate ; therefore he thought he had good Reason to believe, that no Minister would dare to advise his Majesty to concur in such a Measure ; for which Reason there was no need of advising his Majesty against a Measure, which it could not be supposed he would take : That in order to procure the long wish'd-for Peace, it was necessary to convince the World, that they would join heartily with his Majesty in all proper Measures for that End, which they could not more effectually do, than by shewing an Unanimity in their Resolves at the Beginning of the Session of Parliament : That such an Unanimity would certainly have its Weight Abroad, it would encourage our Allies, it would terrify our Enemies, and make both attentive to such Proposals as his Majesty should think proper to make to them ; and it would testify to the World their Zeal for the Support of the present happy Establishment : That for his Part, he look'd upon all Addresses to be in their own Nature general, and that no Words which could be put into an Address could any Ways influence the future Resolutions of Parliament : He look'd upon them only as Words of Course, and no more Obligatory than the penal Words of a

Mr Heathcote

Anno 4. Geo. II.
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Bond, which every one knows obliges the Debtor to the Payment of nothing more than the principal Sum borrow'd, with Interest and Costs of Suit : That the declaring in the Address, that they would support the King's Engagements, necessarily implies that such Engagements do relate to the Interest of England ; and if afterwards it should appear, that any one of them did not, he would not at all think himself obliged by the general Words of the Address to approve of, or support any such Engagement : That he believ'd he should vote for an Address in the Terms as at first propos'd, but that his Voting in that way might not be construed so as to anticipate his Assent to any Thing thereafter propos'd, he thought it proper to declare, That by supporting his Majesty's Engagements, he neither meant to agree to the continuing of the Hessians in the Pay of Great-Britain ; nor to approve of submitting tamely to the Depredations of the Spaniards, nor of allowing them to blockade Gibraltar ; nor did he approve of submitting passively to the Incroachments of the French in the West-Indies ; or to the Opening the Port and Harbour of Dunkirk ; nor would he from thence think himself obliged to approve of any Measure, which he should not at the Time of proposing think expedient, and consistent with the real and true Interest of Great-Britain : That by assuring his Majesty, that the House would support his Engagements, he meant to support no other Engagements, than such as the House should judge to be for the Advantage of the Nation : That for his Part, he was very sure that his Majesty would enter into none but such as were so ; and if it should appear that any other Sort of Engagement had been enter'd into, he would take it to be an Engagement of the Minister's, and not an Engagement of the King's ; and consequently that the Words of the Address did not oblige the House, or any Member of the House, to support the same in any Manner of Way. For these Reasons, he was of Opinion, 'That the Address ought to be in the Terms first propos'd.' Sir Joseph Jekyll and several other Members declaring that they understood Addresses in the same Manner, the Question was put, and it passed without a Division, to address his Majesty in the Terms first propos'd without any Amendment.

Sir J. Jekyll,

An Address received, and presented.

Hereupon a Committee was appointed to draw up an Address accordingly, and the same being drawn up, and reported next Day to the House, was agreed to, and presented to his Majesty by the whole House as follows :

The Address.

Most gracious Sovereign,
' **W** E your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal Subjects, the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament assembled,

bled, beg Leave to return our sincere Thanks for your Majesty's most gracious Speech from the Throne.

We cannot but in Gratitude acknowledge your Majesty's Goodness, in endeavouring to have the Conditions of the Treaty of Seville fulfilled and executed in such Manner as might best secure a general Pacification, and be conformable to your Engagements with your Allies.

And out of a just Sense of the Blessings we enjoy, we think it our Duty to declare our entire Confidence in your Royal Care and Concern for the Honour and Interest of your People, and our perfect Reliance upon your Majesty's Wisdom and Justice, in doing every Thing that shall depend upon you to procure the Satisfaction due to your Allies, by such Means as shall be the most desirable; or, if they prove ineffectual, by such as shall be absolutely necessary.

We are firmly resolved to continue our utmost Zeal and Vigour in Support of your Majesty and your Engagements; esteeming this the least Part of our Duty, when we consider, that those Engagements are the Effect of your Vigilance for the Welfare of your Subjects.

We assure your Majesty, that we will give all possible Dispatch to the Publick Business as it shall from Time to Time be brought before us: That as your People feel the Happiness of your Reign, so your Majesty may feel the Ease of it. And from a dutiful Regard to your Honour and Dignity, and a just Concern for the true Interest of our Country, which we shall always look upon as indispensable and inseparable Obligations, we have the greatest Satisfaction in assuring your Majesty, that we will, with all Cheerfulness, grant such Supplies as shall be necessary for the Service of the ensuing Year; and effectually enable your Majesty to make good your Engagements with your Allies.

Your Majesty's Goodness to your People is very apparent in your avoiding to bring any unnecessary Burthens upon them: And it is the least Return we can make for it, to assure your Majesty, that in case the Circumstances of Publick Affairs shall oblige you to ask the farther Advice and Assistance of your faithful Commons, we will, upon every Occasion, discharge our Duty to your Majesty and those we represent, with that Cheerfulness and Affection which become a British House of Commons, tender and jealous for the Honour of the Crown, careful and solicitous for the Glory and Prosperity of the Kingdom.

To this his Majesty return'd the following Answer.

Gentlemen,

I Return you my hearty Thanks for this dutiful and loyal Address. The Zeal and Affection you express
“ for

The King's Answer thereto

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“ for me, and the Assurances you have given me of enabling
“ me to make good my Engagements with my Allies, will,
“ I am persuaded, have a very good Effect at this critical and
“ important Conjunction.

A Bill brought in to
prevent Pensioners
from Sitting in
the House of Com-
mons.

February 1. The House order'd, ' That Leave be given to bring in a Bill, for making more effectual the Laws in Being for disabling Persons, from being chosen Members of, or sitting or voting in the House of Commons, who have any Pension during Pleasure, or for any Number of Years, or any Office held in Trust for them.

Feb. 2. In pursuance of the above Order a Bill was accordingly brought in, which was read the first Time, and order'd to be read a second Time.

Debate concern-
ing the continuing
12,000 Hessian
Forces in British
Pay.

Feb. 3. The House, in a Grand Committee on the Supply, consider'd of the Estimate of the Charge of the Hessian Troops; upon which there ensued a warm Debate. The Country-Party were against continuing those Troops in our Pay, because they apprehended that they could not be of any Service to Great Britain, for as we were surrounded by the Sea, our Fleet was our only real and proper Security; and therefore we had no Use for the maintaining of Standing Armies either at Home or Abroad, more particularly at a Time of perfect Tranquillity: They alledg'd, ' That if the Apprehension of a War being speedily to break out should be made an Argument for keeping Foreign Troops in our Pay, we could never be without them; for Europe never was, nor ever could be in such Circumstances, as that it could be said, there was no Reason for having any Apprehension of a War: That many Wars might happen upon the Continent with which we had nothing to do; and if we should at any Time have the Misfortune of being involv'd in any War, it was then time enough to take Foreign Troops into our Pay, but 'till then there was no Necessity for it, for we should always find Troops enough in Europe to hire, whenever we had Occasion for them: That therefore the keeping of such Troops in Pay at present, when we had no Occasion for them, was a Wasting of the publick Money, which every Man, who has any Regard to the Interest and Welfare of his Native Country, ought to prevent as far as lies in his Power.' To this it was answer'd by the Courtiers, ' That tho' we were disjoin'd by the Sea from the Continent of Europe, yet as long as we had any Trade or Communication with any of the Countries upon the Continent, we could not help being involv'd in some of their Quarrels, as well as having Quarrels of our own with some of them: That by Means of our Influence upon the Affairs of the Continent we had got a great many Advantages in Trade, and in order to maintain those Advanges we had got,

we

we were obliged from Time to Time to interfere in the Quarrels among Foreign Princes: That some of the Countries of Europe had so little Communication with the Sea, that they were entirely out of the Reach of our Fleet, and therefore, in case they laid the Trade of our Subjects in their Dominions under any Hardships or Inconveniencies, or offer'd us any other Injury or Indignity, we had no other way of Righting or Revenging ourselves, but by getting some of their powerful Neighbours and Rivals upon the Continent to engage in our Quarrel, which we could never procure without engaging in some of theirs: That this Consideration first brought on the Treaty of Hanover, and obliged us to take the Hessian Troops into our Pay: That such Measures prevented the fatal Effects of the Treaty of Vienna between the Emperor and Spain, and at last brought about the Treaty of Seville, by which Spain was effectually disunited from the Emperor; but that in order to do this, we were obliged to enter into some new Engagements with Spain, by which we had bound ourselves to see 6000 Spanish Troops introduc'd into Italy, to secure the eventual Succession of the Infante Don Carlos to the Dutchies of Tuscany, Parma and Placentia: That the Emperor not only refused to consent amicably to the Introduction of those Spanish Troops, but had fill'd Italy with his Troops, in order to repel the Spaniards by Force, in case we and our Allies offer'd to introduce them without his Consent: That we had already seen the good Effects of having those Hessian Troops in our Pay; and the Continuance of them might probably have such an Influence upon the Emperor, as at last to induce him to agree to reasonable Terms; whereas, if we should now dismiss them, it would free the Emperor from all Fears of being attack'd upon that Side: That thereupon he would become more obstinate, and his Obstinacy would certainly involve Europe in a general War, which would cost us a great many Millions; so that they could not but look upon dismissing the Hessian Troops, at this Time, as a very unreasonable and foolish Piece of Thrift, because we thereby run the great Risk of losing Millions, for the Sake of saving a Year's Subsidy to those Troops.' Then the Question being put, it was resolv'd, That 241,259 l. 1 s. 3 d. be granted to his Majesty, for defraying the Expence of 12,000 Hessians taken into his Majesty's Pay, for the Service of the Year 1731.

Feb. 6. A Petition of the Merchants and other Traders of the City of Bristol, trading to his Majesty's Colonies in America, was presented to the House, complaining of the great Interruptions of their Trade to the said Colonies, and the Depredations of the Spaniards for several Years past; who, notwithstanding the Resolutions of that House, [See Page 44.] and his Majesty's Endeavours to obtain for his

Anno 4. Geo. II.
1730-31.

A Petition from several Bristol-Merchants trading to America, complaining of the Spanish Depredations;

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his Subjects just and reasonable Satisfaction, still continued their Depredations, and had lately taken and plunder'd several Ships and Vessels belonging to Bristol and other British Ports, and had treated such as had fallen into their Hands in a very barbarous and cruel Manner, and therefore praying the Consideration of the House, and such timely and adequate Remedy as to the House should seem fit.

Which is referr'd
to a Committee of
the whole House.

This Petition was referr'd to a Committee of the whole House.

Debate concerning
the Subsidy to the
D. of Wolfen-
bittel.

Feb. 10. The House resolv'd itself again into a Committee of the whole House, to consider farther of the Supply granted to his Majesty, when a Debate arose about the Subsidy payable to the Duke of Wolfenbittel. The Country-Party insisted that all those Subsidies were of no Service to Great Britain; and that they were paid only for the sake of protecting his Majesty's Foreign Dominions, which was contrary to the following Clause in the Act of Settlement; viz. 'That in case the Crown shall come to any Person not a Native of England, this Nation shall not be obliged to a War in Defence of Dominions not belonging to this Crown.' To this the Courtiers answer'd, 'That all the Quarrel we had with the Emperor was upon account of the Interest and Trade of England, and not at all on account of any of his Majesty's Foreign Dominions; so that if they should be involv'd in a War, it would be so far from involving Great Britain in any War upon account of them, that the Case would be directly the contrary; they would be involved in a War for Defence of the Trade and Commerce of Great-Britain: That since we had a Quarrel with the Emperor, who was a very powerful Prince upon the Continent, we had no Way of Revenging this Quarrel, but by engaging as many Princes upon the Continent as we could on our Side; and that therefore it was necessary to continue those Subsidies 'till we could bring the Emperor to our Terms.' Then the Question being put, the Committee likewise agreed to the continuing of this Subsidy, and resolv'd, that the Sum of 25,000 l. be granted to his Majesty, for one Year's Subsidy to the Duke of Brunswick Lunenburgh Wolfenbittel.

Petitions against
the Proceedings
at Law being in
Latin;

Feb. 11. Two Petitions were presented to the House, from the Quarter-Sessions of the Peace held for the East and North Ridings of Yorkshire, complaining, 'That the obliging Grand-Jury-Men, at the Sessions of the Peace, to make their Presentments in a Language, which few of them understood; and the suffering in any of the Proceedings of the Courts of Justice, or in any of the Transactions of the Law, whereby the Person or Property of the Subject may be affected, the Use of a Language not intelligible and of a Character not legible, but by the Learned in the Law, were great

great Occasions of the Delay of Justice, and gave Room to most dangerous Frauds: That Special Pleadings, by their Intricacy and Dilatoriness, render'd the Prosecution of the Rights of the Subject difficult and expensive: That the Recovery of small Debts, as the Law then stood, was impracticable, and the Number of Attornies excessive; and praying the House to take these Grievances into Consideration, and to give such Remedy as to the House shall seem meet.' These Petitions were order'd to be refer'd to a Committee.

Anno 4. Geo. II.
1730-31.

Which are refer'd
to a Committee.

Feb. 17. The Pension-Bill was read the third Time and pass'd; and Mr Sandys was order'd to carry it to the Lords and desire their Concurrence: But their Lordships rejected it on the second Reading.

The Pension-Bill
pass'd the House
of Commons: But
rejected by the
Lords.

Feb. 23. A Petition of several Merchants, Planters and others, trading to and interest'd in his Majesty's Sugar Colonies in America, was presented to the House in behalf of themselves and many others, complaining, That divers of his Majesty's Subjects, residing within his Dominions in America, and elsewhere, had of late Years carried on a Trade to the Foreign Sugar-Colonies in America, from whence they were supplied with Sugar, Rum, Molasses, and their other Productions, instead of those from our own Colonies, as well as with Foreign European Goods and Manufactures, contrary to the Intention of the Laws in Being, and the Treaty made with France in 1686; and as that new Method of Trade encreas'd and enriched the Colonies of other Nations, so it was injurious to the Trade of this Kingdom, and greatly impoverish'd the British Sugar-Colonies; and therefore the Petitioners pray'd the Consideration of the House, and such Relief as the House should think fit. This Petition was referred to the Consideration of a Committee.

Petition from the
Sugar Colonies in
America.

Which is refer'd
to a Committee.

Feb. 25. A Petition of the Corporation of Liverpool, and also of the Merchants trading from that Port to his Majesty's Colonies in the West-Indies, was presented to the House and read; complaining of their Sufferings by the continued Depredations of the Spaniards, who had treated such as had fallen into their Hands in a very barbarous and cruel Manner, and praying the Consideration of the House, and such Redress as the House should think fit: This Petition was referred to a Committee of the whole House.

Petition of the
Liverpool-Mer-
chants complain-
ing of the Depre-
dations of the Spa-
niards in the
West-Indies;

Which is refer'd
to a Committee
of the whole
House.

March 3. The Pension-Bill having been, on the Day before, rejected by the Lords on the second Reading thereof, a Motion was made by Mr Sandys, That a Committee be appointed to inquire whether any Member of the House had directly or indirectly any Pensions during Pleasure, or for any Number of Years, or any Offices from the Crown holden in Trust for them, in part or in the whole. Tho' the

Motion for ap-
pointing a Com-
mittee to inquire
if any Members
of the House had
Pensions from the
Crown.

Anno 4. Geo. II.
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Motion for a Bill
to prevent the
Translation of
Bishops.

The English Law-
Bill twice read,
and order'd to be
Printed;

Pension-Bill had met with no Opposition in the House of Commons, yet this Motion was vigorously oppos'd by the Courtiers; and the Question being put on Mr Sandys's Motion, it was carried in the Negative by 206 against 143.

March 4. A Motion was made, and the Question put, That leave be given to bring in a Bill, *To prevent the Translation of Bishops*; which occasion'd a Debate. In Support of the Motion it was urg'd, 'That such a Bill was necessary to prevent a too great Dependence of that Part of the Legislature upon the Crown.' To this the Courtiers answer'd, 'That such a Law would be a great Inroad upon the Prerogative of the Crown, and an Injury to the Rights of the Clergy.' Then the Question being put on the Motion, it pass'd in the Negative. This Motion was generally suppos'd to be owing to a remarkable Speech having been made, in the House of Lords, against the Pension-Bill, by Dr S—— Bishop of B——r, the Day before, and to the Unanimity which appear'd in the reverend Bench in their Opposition to that Bill.

The same Day Sir George Saville, Bart. Member for Yorkshire, presented to the House, a Bill to enact, That all Proceedings in Courts of Justice should be in English, which was read the first Time, and order'd to be read a second Time, and likewise to be printed.

While this Bill was depending in the House, great Opposition was made to it, and the principal Arguments insisted on were, 'That if the Language and Writing of the Law should be alter'd, and made according to the modern Way of Speaking and Writing, no one would ever be at the Pains to study that ancient Language and Writing, which most of our old valuable Records are wrote in, so that the Use of them would in a few Years be entirely lost: That the Method of distributing Justice was now established according to a most concise and regular Form, which must be entirely alter'd, if the Language and Methods of Pleading should be chang'd: That this would necessarily produce such a Confusion, that it would cost many Years painful and troublesome Application, before the new Forms could be settled in a certain and regular Course of Proceedings; so that the making of those Alterations would occasion greater Delay of Justice; give more Room to dangerous Frauds; render the Prosecution of the Rights of the Subject more difficult and expensive; the Recovery of small Debts more impracticable; and the Number of Attornies more excessive than heretofore.' To these Objections it was answer'd by the Advocates for the Bill, 'That tho' both the Language and Writing of the Law should be alter'd, there would be no Danger of losing the Use of our ancient Records; because, as long

as we have any such, there always will be some Men, who either out of Curiosity, or for the sake of Gain, will make it their Business to understand both the Language and Character in which they are wrote, in the same Manner as we find among us now several Gentlemen, who make it their Business to learn to understand the Language and Character of Manuscripts, much ancients than any of our Records : That a very few of such Law-Antiquarians will suffice, considering the little Occasion we have in any Law Proceedings to have Recourse to any very ancient Records ; and that when they are made use of, they often do more Harm than Good ; it being necessary for every Nation to have private Property determined and ascertained by a continued Possession for a moderate 'Term of Years.' And as to the Set-Forms of the Law, it was alledg'd, ' That we had already too many of them, and that they were of Opinion that nothing so much perplex'd and retarded the Proceedings of the Courts of Justice, as a too nice Observance of the establish'd Forms : That such Forms are generally brought, for the sake of new Fees, to such a Bulk by the Lawyers of all Countries, that every Country have found it necessary from Time to Time to curtail and abridge them : That Justice was generally the most speedily, and the most impartially, distributed in those Places where the fewest Forms were observ'd : That therefore they thought the Destruction of our Law-Forms was a good Argument for the Bill, instead of being one against it ; because it would take up a considerable Time, before the Lawyers could again perplex the Course of Justice, with a Number of useless Forms and Ceremonies.'

This Bill afterwards pass'd both Houses, and obtain'd the Royal Assent, notwithstanding the Opposition of the whole Body of the Lawyers.

March 5. The House, in a Grand Committee, consider'd of the Petitions of the Merchants of Bristol and Liverpool, relating to the Depredations of the Spaniards : And after hearing Council for the Petitioners, and examining several Captains and Owners of Ships, who gave an Account of a very great Number of British Ships, taken or plunder'd by the Spaniards, without any just Pretence of their having been carrying on any contraband Trade with any of the Spanish Dominions, came to the following Resolutions, viz. I. That the Petitioners had fully proved and made good the Allegations of their Petition. II. That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, that he would be graciously pleas'd to continue his Endeavours to prevent the Depredations of the Spaniards for the future ; to procure full Satisfaction for the Damages then sustain'd ; and to secure to the British Subjects the full and uninterrupted Exercise of

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Anno 4. Geo. II.
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And pass'd into a Law.

The Commons, in a Grand Committee, consider'd of the Petitions of the Bristol and Liverpool Merchants relating to the Spanish Depredations.

And resolv'd to address his Majesty on that Affair.

their

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1731.

Debate concern-
ing that Address.

their Trade and Navigation to and from the British Colonies in America. These Resolutions being reported were agreed to by the House.

Then a Motion was made for the following Amendment to the above Address, viz. *And to procure a full, prompt and speedy Satisfaction*; on which there was a long Debate. Those who were for the Motion insisted, ' That it was the Business of Parliament to protect, or take Care that the Subjects should be protected from all Injuries and Wrongs both at Home and Abroad; and that the Case before them was an Injury of so high a Nature, that it required not only a full, but a prompt and speedy, Redress. The Courtiers hereupon endeavour'd to shew, ' That the Adding those Words would look as if the House had a Diffidence in his Majesty's Conduct and Concern for the Good of his Subjects: At last the Question being put it was carried against Adding those Words, by 207 against 135.

A Bill order'd to be brought in for Relief of the Sugar-Colonies in America.

March 22. Upon the Report of the Committee, to whom the Petition of the Merchants trading to, and interested in, his Majesty's Sugar-Colonies in America had been referr'd, a Bill was order'd to be brought in for better securing and encouraging the Trade of those Colonies.

March 26. The said Bill was presented to the House by Sir John Rushout, Bart. Member for Eveham, and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

Petition from the Agent for Massachusetts-Bay, and Connecticut against the said Bill;

April 2. A Petition of Francis Wilks, Agent for Massachusetts-Bay, and for Connecticut in New-England, against the said Bill, was presented and read, and referr'd to the above Committee.

Which passes the Commons.

April 14. The Sugar-Colony Bill was read the third Time and pass'd: But was afterwards dropt in the House of Lords.

Motion for an Address to the King to discharge the 12,000 Hessian Forces.

April 30. A Motion was made, and the Question put, That an humble Address be presented to desire his Majesty, That he will be graciously pleased, for the Ease of his Subjects of this Kingdom, to give Orders for discharging the 12,000 Men of the Troops of the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, then in the Pay of his Majesty as King of Great Britain: But after some Debate, it pass'd in the Negative.

Address to the King for the State of the Trade of the Colonies in America, to be laid before the House next Session, by the Board of Trade.

May 5. It was resolv'd, That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, That he will be graciously pleased to give Directions to the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, to prepare a Representation to be laid before the House, in the next Session of Parliament, of the State of his Majesty's Colonies and Plantations in America, with respect to any Laws made, Manufactures set up, and Trade carried on there, which may affect the Trade, Navigation and Manufactures of this Kingdom.

Then

Then a Motion was made, and the Question put, That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, That he will be graciously pleased to give such Orders and Instructions to the several Governors of his Colonies and Plantations in America, as his Majesty shall think most proper, to prevent the setting up, or to discourage the Improvement in, any of the said Colonies, of Woolen, Linnen, Iron, and other Manufactures, which may interfere with, and be prejudicial to the Manufactures of this Kingdom : But it pass'd in the Negative.

Anno 4. Geo. 3.
1731.

Motion for a farther Address on that Subject.

May 6. The above Address was presented to the King ; to which his Majesty return'd for Answer, " That he would " give Directions accordingly."

The King's Answer to the above Address.

May 7. A Motion was made, and the Question put, That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, That he will be pleased to give Orders, that the proper Officers do prepare an Account to be laid before that House, in the next Session of Parliament, of the Value of the Exports and Imports between this Kingdom and his Majesty's Plantations in America, and all foreign Countries, from Christmas 1720 to Christmas 1730, distinguishing each Year, in each Plantation or foreign Country : But the Question being put, it pass'd in the Negative.

Motion for an Address relating to the Exports and Imports of the American Colonies.

The same Day the King came to the House of Peers, and the Commons being come thither, his Majesty made the following Speech :

My Lords and Gentlemen,

" **I** T is a great Pleasure to me, that, at the Close of this
" Session of Parliament, I am able to acquaint you, that
" the Hopes I had conceived and given you, of seeing very
" suddenly a happy Period put to the Troubles and Disorders
" which had been so long apprehended, are now,
" by the Treaty signed at Vienna, answer'd and accomplished."

King's Speech at putting an End to the Fourth Session

" A Project of a Convention betwixt the Emperor and
" the Maritime Powers, for accommodating the Differences
" and Disputes that were subsisting, having been formed,
" the Treaty is concluded and signed by me and the Emperor ; and is now under the Consideration of the States
" General, the Forms of that Government not admitting a
" previous Concert in a Negotiation of this Nature : And,
" as this Treaty principally regards the Execution of the
" Treaty of Seville, it is likewise communicated to the Courts
" of France and Spain, as Parties to the Treaty of Seville :
" And I have just received Advice, that the Ratifications
" between me and the Emperor are exchange'd."

" The Conditions and Engagements, which I have enter'd
" into

Anno 4. Geo. II.
1731.

“ into upon this Occasion, are agreeable to that necessary
 “ Concern, which this Nation must always have for the Se-
 “ curity and Preservation of the Balance of Power in Europe:
 “ And as the uncertain and violent State of Affairs, to which
 “ Europe was reduced, and the Mischiefs of an immediate
 “ general War, which began to be thought unavoidable,
 “ are now removed; this happy Turn duly improved, with
 “ a just Regard to our former Alliances which it shall be
 “ my Care to preserve, gives us a favourable Prospect of
 “ seeing the Publick Tranquility re-established.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

“ I return you my Thanks for the effectual Supplies, which
 “ you have granted me for the Service of the present Year,
 “ and for the proper Disposition you have made of the Pub-
 “ lick Funds, towards lessening and discharging the National
 “ Debt: The remarkable Dispatch and Unanimity which
 “ you have shewn, at this critical Conjuncture, has added
 “ very much to the Credit and Weight of your Proceedings;
 “ and you shall find as great a Readiness on my part to ease
 “ the Burthens of my People, as soon as the Circumstances
 “ and Situation of Affairs will admit of it, as you have
 “ shewn to raise the Supplies necessary for the Service of the
 “ Publick.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ I hope at your Return into the Country, you will find
 “ all Attempts to raise a Spirit of Discontent among my Peo-
 “ ple, by unjust Clamours and Misrepresentations, vain and
 “ ineffectual. All malicious Insinuations to the Prejudice of
 “ my Measures must surely vanish, when it shall appear
 “ that my first and principal Care has been for the Interest
 “ and Honour of this Kingdom. Let it be your Endeavour
 “ to remove all groundless Jealousies and Apprehensions,
 “ that the Satisfaction of this Nation may be as general, as
 “ it is my earnest Desire that their Happiness may be; let
 “ all my People, let all Orders of Men enjoy, quietly and
 “ unenvied, the Rights, Privileges, and Indulgences,
 “ which by Law they are intitled to; let no Innovations
 “ disturb any Part of my Subjects in the Possession of their
 “ legal Property; let all that are zealous in the Support of
 “ me and my Government partake in common the Benefits
 “ of the present happy Establishment; and let your Good-
 “ Will to one another be as extensive as my Protection, which
 “ all my good and faithful Subjects have an equal Right to,
 “ and may equally depend upon.”

The Parliament
prorogued.

Then the Lord Chancellor prorogued the Parliament to
 the 27th of July: They were afterwards farther prorogued
 to the 13th of January.

SPEECHES

SPEECHES and DEBATES

In the FIFTH SESSION of the

First Parliament of King GEORGE II.

ON the 13th of January, the Parliament being met in pursuance of their last Prorogation, his Majesty made the following Speech to both Houses.

Anno 5. Geo. II.
1731-32.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

IT is a great Pleasure to me, that I am able to acquaint you, that the Expectations which I have from Time to Time given you, of seeing the general Tranquility of Europe restored and established, are now fully answer'd.

King's Speech at
opening the Fifth
Session.

The Share of Credit and Influence, which the Crown of Great-Britain has had in bringing about this difficult and desirable Work, and which redounds so much to the Honour and Interest of this Nation; as it is universally confessed Abroad, will, I am confident, be agreeable to my People, and acknowledged with Gratitude by you.

It is well known, that from the Time of concluding the Quadruple Alliance, the several Courts of Europe have been employed in finding Means to execute what the principal Powers had agreed to, for the Succession of Tuscany and Parma, in favour of an Infant of Spain; but the various jarring and contending Interests, hard to be reconciled and united in effectuating a Point of so much Importance; the extended Views and Hopes of obtaining on every Side farther Advantages; and the natural Jealousies and Distrusts arising among the several Powers concerned, from such opposite Principles and Purposes, had kept in Suspence and unexecuted, what the Court of Spain had very much at Heart; and occasioned such Troubles and Disturbances, as embarrassed the Affairs of Europe for many Years, and particularly affected the Interests of this Nation.

You have from Time to Time been informed of the different Measures and Negotiations, that have on all Sides been carrying on during this long unsettled State of Affairs; and you have enabled me to persevere in maintaining the Rights and Possessions of this Kingdom, and in preserving the Peace and Balance of Europe.

The Preliminary Articles and the subsequent Transactions thereupon not answering the Expectations of the Court of Spain, and creating a Coolness and Dissatisfaction among the contracting Parties of the first Treaty of Vien-

na,

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1731-32.

“ na, laid the Foundation of the Treaty of Seville, and
“ thereby dissolved that Union, which had raised so many
“ Apprehensions, and so long alarmed the World.

“ The Execution of the Treaty of Seville was the great
“ Difficulty that still remained; and this, unfurmountable
“ as it was thought, I have by your Support, and by the
“ Confidence you reposed in me, been able to overcome by
“ just and honourable Treaties, without coming to Extremi-
“ ties, and without the Hazard and Expence of a general
“ Rupture, or kindling a War in any Part of Europe.

“ Parma and Placentia are now in the actual Possession of
“ the Infant Don Carlos; the six thousand Spaniards are
“ quietly admitted and quartered in the Dutchy of Tuscany,
“ to secure, by the express Consent and Agreement of the
“ Great Duke, the Reversion of his Dominions; and a Fa-
“ mily-Convention is made between the Courts of Spain and
“ Tuscany, for preserving Peace and Friendship between
“ those two Houses, during the Life of the Great Duke.

“ For perfecting and finishing this tedious Work, con-
“ ducted through a Series of infinite Changes and Vicissi-
“ tudes, and incumbered with all the different Views of In-
“ terest and Ambition, I concluded the late Treaty of Vi-
“ enna; wherein I have entered into no Engagements contra-
“ ry to former Treaties, or tending either to aggrandize or
“ reduce the Power or Weight of any Potentate, calculated
“ purely for preserving a due Balance, and to avoid such
“ Confusion, as new Changes and Convulsions upon future
“ Events would unavoidably create, and wherein Great-
“ Britain could never stand by, and be an idle Spectator.

“ When this shall be duly considered, and it shall be seen
“ that the Wounds which have been long bleeding are in-
“ tirely healed, groundless Jealousies will cease, ill Humours
“ will subside, and Peace and good Harmony return toge-
“ ther; all Diffidence and Distrust, the natural Effect of re-
“ peated Delays, artfully instilled and industriously improv-
“ ed and aggravated, will be removed; and mutual Satisfac-
“ tion be the Consequence of the punctual and effectual Per-
“ formance of all Engagements on our Side, which will ever
“ be remembered with great Regard and Honour to this
“ Crown and Nation, and leave an indispensable Obligation
“ upon those that are immediately concern’d, to make such
“ Returns as Honour and Justice call for and demand.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

“ The Estimates for the Service of the current Year shall
“ be prepar’d and laid before you, which you will observe
“ to be considerably less than those of former Years: It is
“ a Pleasure to me to give Ease to my Subjects, whenever
“ the Welfare of the Publick will admit of it. You have

“ seen

“ seen the happy Effects of your former Zeal and Resolu-
 “ tion ; Success has attended my Measures, and you reap the
 “ Fruit of my Endeavours and of your Confidence in me ;
 “ and it must be a Satisfaction to you to reflect, that all the
 “ Expences, which you have lately made, are amply recom-
 “ pensed by preventing and avoiding far greater.

Anno 5. Geo. II.
 1731-32.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ This happy Situation of Affairs, I promise myself, will
 “ inspire you all with such Temper and Unanimity, and such
 “ a seasonable Zeal for the Publick Good, as becomes a
 “ Parliament sensible of the great Blessings they enjoy : The
 “ Duty and Affections of my Subjects are all the Return I
 “ desire for my paternal Love and Concern for them. My Go-
 “ vernment has no Security, but what is equally conducive
 “ to your Happiness and to the Protection of my People :
 “ and your Prosperity has no Foundation, but in the De-
 “ fence and Support of my Government : Our Safety is
 “ mutual, our Interests are inseparable.”

The Commons being return'd to their House, Mr Speaker reported his Majesty's Speech, and thereupon the Lord * Hervey rose up, and after having enumerated the many Difficulties this Nation was brought under by the Intrigues of our Enemies Abroad, and the many Dangers and Expences we should have been inevitably involv'd in, if the War with which Europe was threaten'd, had not been prevented by his Majesty's great Foresight and wise Measures ; by the good Success of which the Tranquility of Europe was settled and establish'd upon a firm and lasting Foundation ; his Lordship mov'd, ' That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, to return his Majesty the Thanks of this House for his most gracious Speech from the Throne ; to declare our highest Satisfaction in seeing the general Tranquility of Europe restor'd and establish'd by his Majesty's Credit and Influence, with so much Glory to the Crown of Great Britain, and Honour to this Nation ; to acknowledge with Gratitude his Majesty's unwearied Endeavours for the Happiness of his People, and his Goodness in pursuing with Steadiness and Constancy such Measures, as best conduced to the preserving the Rights and Possessions of these Kingdoms ; to express our just Sense of his Majesty's great Wisdom, in being able to surmount the various Difficulties that so long embarrass'd the Affairs of Europe, and particularly affected the Interests of Great Britain ; and by pacifick Measures and Negotiations to bring to a happy Conclusion the Disputes, that for many Years had been subsisting and depending ; and by just

Debate on the Lord
 Hervey's Motion
 for an Address of
 Thanks.

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M

and

* Appointed Vice-Chamberlain of his Majesty's Household, May 7, 1720.

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Mr Clutterbuck.

and honourable Treaties to settle and re-establish the Publick Tranquility, without the Hazard and Expence of a general Rupture, or kindling a War in any Part of Europe; to assure his Majesty that this House, sensible of the happy Effects of the Confidence so justly reposed in his Majesty, and the Blessings we enjoy under his Government, will with Chearfulness grant the Supplies necessary for the Service of the current Year, for the Defence and Support of his Majesty's Government, and for the Security and Protection of his People.' His Lordship was seconded by Mr Clutterbuck*, who explain'd the several jarring Interests of Europe, which had all been happily reconcil'd by his Majesty's Wisdom and good Conduct; and added, 'That as our Security depends upon the Preservation of the Balance of Power in Europe, we could not in common Prudence have sat unconcern'd, and seen any one of the Powers of Europe swallow'd up by another: That if any War had broke out, we must necessarily have been concern'd, and every Man was sensible of the fatal Effects such a War might have been attended with: That we were now free from all such Apprehensions; and as the present Happiness and Tranquility not only of this Nation, but of Europe in general, was owing to the prudent and pacifick Measures pursu'd by his Majesty, he could not but approve of the Terms of Addressing propos'd, and therefore he seconded the Motion.'

Sir Wilfr. Lawson.

Then Sir Wilfrid Lawson stood up, and spoke as follows:
Mr Speaker,

'I shall join with all my Heart in an Address of Thanks to his Majesty, for his most gracious Speech from the Throne; but I cannot agree with descending so far into Particulars, as are contain'd in the Motion made by the noble Lord who spoke first, and seconded by the honourable Gentleman who spoke last. The Treaties, upon which it is pretended, that the Tranquility of Europe and the Happiness of this Nation are so firmly and lastingly establish'd, are not now before the House; and therefore, from my own Knowledge, I can say nothing about them, nor can I form a Judgment of the Honour or Advantage which will from thence accrue to this Kingdom: But if I judge from what I hear or see abroad in the World, I must be of Opinion, that notwithstanding the great Things we have done for the Crown of Spain, and the Favours we have procured for the royal Family of that Kingdom, we have as yet received very little Satisfaction for the Injuries done by them to this Nation. I have seen publish'd, in our News-Papers, an Order of Instructions from his Catholick Majesty to the Governors of his Ports

* Made one of the Lords of the Admiralty at the End of this Session.

Ports in the Indies, relating to the Depredations committed by the Spaniards upon our Merchants trading to those Seas, but I cannot look upon this Order as any Satisfaction for the Depredations already committed; neither can I look upon it as a sufficient Check against the committing of any in Time to come: There are so many Conditions in this Order, so many *Ifs* and *Ands*, that it affords a large Scope to the Spaniards in that Part of the World, to go on in the taking or plundering of our Merchants Ships, under the Pretence of their being concerned in some illicit Commerce, or of their being found navigating in those Latitudes, where the Spaniards may say they ought not to navigate. These Orders are so general, that the Captains of the Spanish Guarda-Costa's and the Governors, who are generally Partners with the Captains, may put any Construction they please upon them; and we may expect, that the Construction to be put upon them will be most unfavourable for the Subjects of this Nation. I shall not, Sir, at present make any Motion, but as a Member of this House, I thought it incumbent upon me to declare my Sentiments in an Affair, in which the Honour of this House and the Interest of the Nation are so much concern'd.

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Mr Shippen spoke next.

Mr Shippen:

Mr Speaker,

* I rise not only to offer my Sentiments against the Terms of the Address propos'd, but likewise to make a Motion. It has, Sir, upon such an Occasion, been the ancient Custom of this House, to present an Address of Thanks to his Majesty, for his most gracious Speech from the Throne, but such Addresses were in former Days always in general Terms; there were in them no flattering Paragraphs, no long Compliments made to the Throne, for Transactions and Successes which had never been laid before the House, and of which, by a necessary Consequence, the House must have been suppos'd to have been entirely ignorant: It is true, Sir, we have of late Years fallen into a Custom of Complimenting the Throne upon every such Occasion with long Addresses, and this Custom has been follow'd so long, that I am afraid it may at last become a Vote of course, to vote an Address to his Majesty, in such Terms as shall be concert'd by those very Men, whose Measures are approv'd of by the Compliment made to the Throne. I confess, Sir, that I am so little of a Courtier, that I cannot return Thanks for what I know nothing of; nor can I applaud before I know a Reason for such Applause. I am not at all against an Address of Thanks in the ancient usual Style; but tho' I should happen to be single and alone in my Opposition, which I hope I shall not, yet I am resolv'd to oppose Addressing in the Terms

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moved for, if it were for no other Reason but this, that such a Motion may not stand upon the Journals of this House, as agreed to *Nem. Con.*: For if not taken Notice of in Time, such humble Addresses to the Throne may at last come to pass as a Matter of course; and be as little regarded or opposed, as some Affairs now are, which at first stood a long Contest before they could be introduc'd.

Sir, It is no new Thing in me to oppose such Addresses; I have always opposed them; and though I do not thereby appear to be a good Courtier, yet it shews that I have some Respect for the Honour and Dignity of this House; besides, Sir, when such Addresses have been proposed, it has been promised, and we have been assured, that no Advantage should afterwards be taken of any Words contain'd in the complimenting Part of such Address; but every Member in this House knows, that when the House had an Opportunity of examining Things more particularly, and Debates ensued thereupon, they have then been told that they could not censure any of the past Transactions, because they had approv'd of them all by their Address of Thanks to his Majesty for his most gracious Speech from the Throne. I hope, Sir, for the sake of my Country, that all Things are well, that our Affairs both Abroad and at Home are in that prosperous Condition, in which they have been represented to us; but as we cannot as yet judge from the Effects, and as the Treaties, from which this great Prosperity and lasting Tranquility is to arise, have not yet been laid before us; I can not but look upon it as an Anticipation of the Resolutions of this House to thank his Majesty for those Treaties, which we have not as yet had any Opportunity either to peruse or consider; and therefore I move, That the first Part only of the Motion already made should stand, and that all the other complimenting Paragraphs should be left out.

Mr W. Pulteney.

Then Mr William Pulteney † spoke as follows:

Mr Speaker,

‘ I am very willing that an Address of Thanks be presented to his Majesty, for his most gracious Speech from the Throne; but I cannot agree to an Address in the Terms proposed by the noble Lord who made the Motion, because they

† The following Article appear'd in the Gazette, viz. July 1, 1731. ‘ This Day his Majesty in Council called for the Council-Book, and with his own Hand struck the Name of William Pulteney, Esq; out of the List of Privy-Counsellors; His Majesty farther ordered the said William Pulteney to be put out of all the Commissions of the Peace; and that the several Lord-Lieutenants, who have given him Deputations, do revoke the same: And the Right Hon. the Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain, and his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, were directed to give the necessary Orders therein.’

they seem to imply an Approbation of all that has been transacted or negotiated by his Majesty's Ministers ; I am the more obliged upon this Occasion to declare my Opinion, because of the Motion's having been made by that noble Member, lest some of my Friends should be thereby misled, and made to believe that I am for the Motion in its full Extent. We ought to thank his Majesty for his most gracious Speech, but I cannot see any Reason we have to thank him for our Liberties and Properties : They are secured to us by our Constitution ; and as Subjects of Great Britain we have a natural Right to them, and his Majesty is far from having the least Thought of making any Incroachments upon them : But as for the Treaties and Negotiations abroad, and the Honours and Advantages we have by them acquir'd, I do not think that we can take Notice of them, for 'till they be laid before the House, we must be presumed to be ignorant of them. For my own part I shall be glad to know that we are now at last got into a right Way ; but supposing that all is now right with us, I am certain there was a Time some Years ago, when we might have been as right as we are now, and upon the same Conditions. If we had embraced that Opportunity, a great deal of Money would have been saved to the Nation ; but in those Days, the Guaranty of the Pragmatick-Sanction was looked on as inconsistent with the Interest and Happiness of this Nation, and was represented as such even by those who have now agreed to it ; what were their Reasons for representing it in such a hideous Shape at that Time, and for placing it now in so amiable a View, I cannot comprehend : For my own Part, Sir, I do not see any Necessity we were under of agreeing to it, even at this present Time ; for by our agreeing to that Guaranty, we lay ourselves under an Obligation of assisting the Austrian Family, whenever they shall be attacked by any Potentate whatever, except the Grand Signior ; they may happen to be attacked, when it will be much against the Interest of this Nation, to engage itself in a War upon any foreign Account ; and if they should acquire many more Territories, it may be for the Interest of the Nation even to join in the Attack, in order to preserve the Balance of Europe, the Establishing of which has already cost us such immense Sums of Money : Thus we may be obliged, either to engage in a War contrary to the Interest and Well-being of our Country, or otherwise be guilty of a Breach of Faith, to the eternal Dishonour of the Nation : These, Sir, are the Circumstances which this Nation may be brought into by entering into this Guaranty so early ; and these, Sir, are Circumstances which every wise Man ought, by all Means, to avoid ; besides, Sir, I do not know but we may be accused of some Sort of Breach of Faith, on account of our late Negotiations

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ations with the Emperor: The French may perhaps say, that by the Treaty of Hanover we were obliged not to treat with any of the Powers, against whom that Treaty seemed to be made, without the Concurrence of our Allies; and yet notwithstanding thereof we not only negotiated, but concluded a Treaty with the Emperor without communicating the same to them; what Reason the French may have for such an Accusation I cannot at present properly speak to; Prussia, it is true, had before set us an Example, and had drawn off from that Treaty long before we had; but France and Holland had adhered firmly to it to the very last.

‘ According to the View I have of our late Negotiations, I cannot say, that either the Honour or the Interest of the Nation has been much considered; it is true, Don Carlos may be now established in the Succession to the Duchy of Tuscany, and in the Possession of the Duchies of Parma and Placentia; the Spanish Troops may be introduced into Italy, and I wish their Introduction do not prove to be the Origin of new Troubles; but in these Things we have no particular Interest. I cannot say that much Regard has been had to the particular Interest of this Nation in our Conduct at home; our Debts have been increased, at least not diminished; and at the same Time Luxury has been so much encouraged, that many have run out a great Part of their Fortunes, and are thereby obliged to depend upon the Court; insomuch that I must say, happy it is for the Nation, that the King is so good and so just, as not to have any Designs against our Liberties: Our Trade is decaying every Day, and Publick Credit is like to be entirely destroyed by the many Publick Frauds that are committed; for Credit depends upon that Faith and Confidence which one Man puts in another, for the Preservation of that which is committed to his Care; but by these Publick Frauds all mutual Faith and Confidence will be taken away; no Man will think his Money safe but when it is locked up in his own Coffers; he will not for the future trust the Management or Keeping thereof to any one Man, or to any Set of Men. However, I hope, Sir, that all our Affairs abroad are now set to rights, and that our domestic Grievances are in a fair Way of being redressed; but if they are so, I must say, it is something like a Pilot, who, though he has a clear, a safe, and a straight Passage for going into Port, yet takes it in his Head to carry the Ship a great way about, through Sands, Rocks and Shallows, and thereby loses a great many of the Seamen, destroys a great deal of the Tackle and Rigging, and puts the Owners to a vast Expence; however, at last, by Chance he hits the Port, and then triumphs in his good Conduct.’

Mr Pulteney having done Speaking, Mr Danvers said, Anno 5. Geo. II.
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 Mr Danvers.
 ' That when he returned to the Country, he should be glad to have something to tell his Country-Neighbours that would please them ; they did not understand Treaties, nor did they trouble their heads much about distant Prospects of Wealth and Happiness ; but he wished he could tell them, that Part of our Debts were paid off, or that some of our Taxes were abolished, or the Standing Army disbanded. These were Effects they would immediately feel, but he was afraid they would be of Opinion, that a Peace attended with a Continuance of all the Taxes, and a Keeping on foot the Standing-Army, did not deserve any Thanks from the Nation.

Sir William Wyndham spoke next.

Sir W. Wyndham;

Mr Speaker,

' I cannot agree to the Terms for Addressing his Majesty, proposed by the noble Member who spoke first, because though every Thing may now be well settled upon a solid and lasting Foundation, yet I cannot think that our Conduct has in every Respect been right ; or that the Interest of this Nation has been, by his Majesty's Ministers, principally and steadily pursued. At one Time we were frightened out of our Wits with Apprehensions that the Pretender was to be put upon us, and that without any Reason for all that I have yet seen or heard upon the Subject. Then Don Carlos was made such a Giant of, that he, that Infant, was to swallow up and destroy all the Powers of Europe ; and at that Time we sued to France for an Alliance, and besought their Assistance, by which we put it in their Power to commence a War whenever they pleased ; and, if they had not been more taken up with Whims and Disputes about Religion, than any wise Nation ought to be, they would certainly have involved us in a War in Conjunction with them ; and thereby would have made us assist them in recovering all that they had lost by the last two Wars, the taking of which from them had cost us so much Blood and Treasure. Some Time after we shook off all Fears of the Pretender, Don Carlos was again diminished to an ordinary Size, and then we began to bully France as much as we had courted it before : Such Conduct cannot appear to me to be right, at least it does not appear to be steady and uniform. Upon the other hand, it must be said of the Imperial Court, that they have acted with Steadiness and Prudence ; they have firmly adhered to the proper Interest of their native Country, and have steadily pursued the Aim they had in View, through all the different Shapes in which the Affairs of Europe have been put within these few Years ; and by this Firmness and Resolution they have at last brought us to their own Terms ; and have accomplished their Designs, notwithstanding the Conjunction and Alliance of so many formidable

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formidable Powers against them ; whereas we have been obliged, in some Manner, to comply with the Demands of almost every Power we have treated with ; and if by such Means we have at last got off upon any tolerable Conditions, it must be said, that we have been like a Man in a Room, who wants to get out, and though the Door be open, and a clear Way to it, yet he stalks round the Room, breaks his Shins over a Stool, tumbles over a Chair, and at last, rumbling over every Thing in his Way, by chance finds the Door and gets out, after abundance of needless Trouble and unnecessary Danger.'

Mr Oglethorpe.

Then Mr Oglethorpe stood up, and spoke as follows :

Sir,

' I do not think, that the Guaranty of the Pragmatick-Sanction is much to be taken Notice of in the present Case ; for there are many other Things which at present relate more nearly to the Honour and Interest of this Nation. I wish I could have heard that the late new Works at Dunkirk had been entirely razed and destroyed ; that we had received a full and compleat Satisfaction for the many Depredations committed by the Spaniards ; and I should be glad to see more Care taken in arming the Country, and disciplining our Militia. I think it was a Scandal to the Nation to appear so much frightened, as we lately appeared to be, at the marching of a few French Troops down to those Coasts of France which lie next to us. We have, it is true, a Standing-Army of good regular Forces ; but I hope this Nation will never be brought so low, as to have nothing to trust to for their Defence, but their Standing-Army : Our Army bears but a small Proportion to the whole Body of the People, they can cover but a small Part of our Coast from an Invasion, and therefore Care should be taken to keep up military Discipline and a warlike Spirit among our Militia, thro' all Parts of the Kingdom ; for whenever we are threatned with an Invasion, our Safety and our Barrier next to our Fleet must depend upon them ; it must be to them chiefly that we must trust our Defence against the Landing of a Foreign Enemy ; and if they come once to lose entirely the Use of Arms, or the Knowledge of military Discipline, an Enemy that can, either by Cunning or Accident, escape our Fleet, may land with little Danger ; and may do a deal of Mischief, before a sufficient Number of our regular Forces can be brought together to oppose them.

' As to our Foreign Affairs, I must say, Sir, that considering how much the Protestants in Germany have been oppress'd by the present Imperial Family, I could have wished with all my Heart to have heard, that some Care had been taken of them in the Treaty we have lately made with the Emperor ; but as the Dutch have not as yet acceded to that Treaty,

Treaty, I hope some Care may as yet be taken of those poor People : I look upon it as a general Benefit, that the Dutch have not as yet acceded, because we may make an Advantage of it by getting them to insist upon all such Additions, Explanations or Amendments, as may be judg'd necessary for the common Good of Europe in general, and of the Protestant Religion in particular. In the mean Time I am pleas'd to find, that we are not now so closely united with France as we formerly were ; for I have generally observ'd, that when two Dogs are in a Leash together, the stronger generally runs away with the weaker ; and I am afraid this was something of the Case between France and us.

Anno 5. Geo. II.

1731-32.

Mr Henry Pelham spoke next for the Motion, and endeavour'd to shew, ' That it was no way inconsistent with the Honour or Dignity of that House, to thank his Majesty in the most particular Terms for every Thing, which he had been most graciously pleas'd to acquaint them with, in his Speech from the Throne : That, in common Decency, they were upon that Occasion to look upon every Thing to be as it had been represent'd to them by his Majesty ; but that no Compliments, as some of the honourable Gentlemen who had spok'd before were pleas'd to call them, that could be put into the Address, could be any way made use of to prevent that House's Inquiry afterwards into the Measures that had been pursu'd, when the Treaties that had been enter'd into should be laid before them : On the contrary, if upon such an Inquiry it should be found, that any of the Negotiations had been carried on, or any of the Treaties concluded, contrary to the Honour or Interest of the Nation, they were then to presume, that his Majesty had been impos'd on, and thereby induced to make such a Speech to them ; and by such an Imposition, those who had advis'd the carrying on such Negotiation, or the concluding of such Treaties, would accumulate Guilt upon themselves, and would heap Coals of Fire upon their own Heads ; for in such a Case, that House was not only to punish such evil Counsellors for Measures so weak or so wicked ; but also to punish them for imposing upon his Majesty, and advising him to make such a Speech from the Throne : That generally, upon the Opening of a Session of Parliament, the Eyes of all Europe were turned towards Great Britain ; and from their first Resolves, all the Neighbouring Powers were to judge of the Unanimity which was to ensue between his Majesty and his Parliament : That if they at first appear'd to be in the least dissident or jealous of his Majesty's Conduct, it would weaken his Influence upon the Councils of foreign Courts ; and thereby they might put it out of his Power to settle

Mr H. Pelham.

Anno 5. Geo. II.
1731-32.

a false Step, if any had been made by his Ministers, and this he was persuaded no Man would incline to do, who was a Friend either to his King or his Country, for the sake of any private Pique he might have to any of his Majesty's Ministers : That for these and many other Reasons, he was for agreeing to the Address in the Terms first moved for.

Mr. H. Walpole.

He was supported by Mr Horatio Walpole, who spoke next.

Mr Speaker,

' The honourable Gentleman upon the Floor [*Mr W. Pulteney*] said, that he was afraid lest the noble Lord, who first moved for an Address, might have some Weight with his Friends. I do not know, Sir, but that it may be so ; I do not know but he may have Weight with some of those, whom that Gentleman now looks upon as his Friends ; but I am persuaded, that nothing that he has said, in opposition to the Motion made by the other, will tend to diminish that Weight which he is afraid of. As to the House's agreeing to the Motion for presenting an Address to his Majesty, and in the Terms proposed by the noble Lord who made the Motion, I need not, Sir, say any Thing to it ; that Affair has been so fully explain'd, and the Reasonableness of it so clearly demonstrated by the Gentlemen who have spoke upon that Side of the Question, that I have nothing to add : But since the Gentlemen, who have spoke on the other Side, have entered into an Examination of the Measures that have been pursued, I hope the House will pardon me if I depart a little from the Subject of the present Debate, in order to answer some of the Objections that have been made to our late Conduct.

' It has been said, Sir, that there was a Time, some Years ago, when the same Thing might have been done that is now done, by which a great deal of Money might have been saved to the Nation. I wish, Sir, the Gentleman, who said so, had told us what particular Time he meant : I know that the entering into the Guaranty of the Pragmatick Sanction was proposed to us some Years ago ; but, Sir, I know that it was then proposed in such dogmatick and positive Terms, that it was inconsistent with the Honour of his Majesty, and of this Nation, to give the least Ear to a Proposal, which was made rather in the Terms of a peremptory Demand, and without offering the least Consideration to this Nation, for our agreeing to enter into such a Guaranty : Besides, Sir, there was at that Time good Reason to fear that Don Carlos was the Person, upon whom the Imperial Court had fixed their Eye, as a Successor to his Imperial Majesty ; and I am sure it was against the Interest of this Nation, to contribute to the establishing of a Person in the full and sole Possession of all the Austrian Dominions, who was by the Quadruple Alliance to have such large Dominions of his own in Italy,
and

and had by his Birth so near a Prospect to the Crown of Spain, and at that Time also a very near Prospect to the Crown of France. This Guaranty was again offered at the Time when the Treaty of Seville was in Agitation; but then again it was rejected, because it was well known, that the Proposal was made at that Time only with a view to disturb the Negotiations then carrying on, and which were so happily ended by the Conclusion of the Treaty of Seville; so that at that Time no Treaty could be entered into by us with the Imperial Court, either about the Guaranty of the Pragmatick Sanction or any Thing else, nor at any Time till they came to be a little more reasonable in their Proposals; and as soon as that Time came, we embraced the Opportunity, and our Negotiations had then all wish'd for Success.

Anno 5. Geo. II.
1731-32.

‘Nor can it be said, Sir, that we have entered into that Guaranty too soon; it was our own Interest to enter into it as soon as possible, because the preserving of the Imperial Dominions entire is necessary for preserving the Balance of Power in Europe: If we had delayed entering into that Guaranty till his Imperial Majesty’s Death, it would then have been too late; Europe would have been in Flames, and the Austrian Dominions divided before we could have done any Thing. There may be Civil Broils in Germany upon the Emperor’s Death without Male Heirs, happen when it will, but surely the best Way of preventing it, is to have the Affair fully settled, and that Settlement strongly guaranty’d before the Accident happens; those who pretend to any Share will then be cautious, and will not be ready to enter into any violent Measures: And I must say, Sir, that if the Imperial Family were in any danger of being ruined or swallowed up by any neighbouring Power, we must engage in the Rescue, let our Circumstances be at that Time what they will; for if such a Ruin should happen, our own would not be a great Way off: This Guaranty we ought, perhaps, to have gone into sooner, because of the fatal Consequences that might have ensued, if his Imperial Majesty had dropt off in the mean Time; but we could not agree to it ’till the Imperial Court agreed to give Satisfaction to Spain, with respect to the Dominions provided for Don Carlos in Italy by the Quadruple Alliance; to the Dutch with respect to the particular Disputes between the Empire and them; and to the Dutch and us with respect to the Ostend Company; and all these his Majesty, by his wife and steady Measures, has at last procured.

‘Sir, I say steady Measures, and I believe it will appear that our Measures have been as steady and uniform, as those of any Court in Europe: Our Aim was to preserve our own

Anno 5. Geo. II.
1731-32.

Dominions Abroad against the Design laid for wresting them from us ; to preserve our Trade against the Incroachment made upon it by the setting up of the Ostend Company ; and to preserve the Balance of Power in Europe against any present or future Attempts for overturning it, in order thereby to establish, as far as is consistent with human Prudence, the general Tranquility of Europe. This Aim was most steadily pursued through the various Shapes, which the Affairs of Europe have taken within a few Years past, and is now at last, in all human Appearance, most happily accomplished ; but it was necessary to establish the present Tranquility of Europe, before we could think of the future : We were engaged, by the Quadruple Alliance, to see the Infant Don Carlos settled in the Succession of the Duchies of Tuscany, Parma, and Placentia ; Spain could not be easy, nor could we expect any sincere Friendship with them, till that was fully and compleatly effectuated ; nor could either the Dutch or we be easy till we saw the Ostend Company absolutely demolished ; and as soon as we got the present Tranquility settled by the Imperial Court's agreeing to these two main Points, then we began to think of the future Tranquility of Europe ; and in order to establish that upon as solid a Foundation as the Nature of the Case will admit of, we have agreed to the Guaranty of the Pragmatick Sanction.

‘ In all these Transactions, the true Interest of this Nation has been most strictly pursued, and never once departed from : The Interest of this Nation is connected with the general Interest of Europe in preserving the Balance of Power ; and therefore it is the Interest of this Nation, as well as of almost every one of the other Nations of Europe, to preserve the Dominions of the Austrian Family entire and undivided : I am sure no Man will say but that it is the Interest of this Nation, that the Duchies of Tuscany, Parma, and Placentia should never be in the Possession of Germany, France or Spain. It is very plain, that it is the Interest of this Nation to have the East-India Trade from Ostend demolished ; and it is as evident that this Nation is particularly interested in the preserving of Gibraltar and Port-Mahon, and at the same Time in cultivating a good Friendship and Correspondence with Spain. In all these Cases the Interest of this Nation is certainly most particularly concerned, and in every one of these Points we have obtained all that we could expect or desire ; and all this without any mean Compliance upon our part, or giving up any Thing that we were before intitled unto ; upon the contrary, whenever any Scheme was offered by any of our Allies, which had the least Appearance of being against the Honour or Interest of this Nation, any Sort of Concurrence was absolutely refused, and thereupon

all

all such Schemes have been dropt : How then can it be said, that neither the Honour nor Interest of this Nation has been regarded in our Negotiations with our Neighbours abroad, or that we have complied with every one in their Turn ?

Anno 5. Geo. II.
1731-32.

‘ In all this Course of Negotiation, there have been many jarring Interests to be reconciled, and many Difficulties to be surmounted, all which his Majesty has, by his Wisdom and good Conduct, got over ; nor is there the least Reason to suspect that, in any one Measure, the publick Faith has been violated, nor has any Power or Potentate any Ground for such a Complaint ; nay, there is not one that does so much as pretend to it. The only View that France had, or at least owned, was to preserve the Tranquility, and to see the Terms of the Quadruple Alliance complied with : If these two Points were brought to a happy Issue, it was all that the French had to demand ; and as both are fully accomplished by the Treaty of Vienna, the French Court have no Reason to complain, so far otherways, that they have declared they are fully satisfied : And as for our taking an Alarm at the March of some of their Troops towards the Coasts of France, which lie opposite to England, it did not proceed from any Jealousy that subsists between the two Nations, but only from that prudent Jealousy which every Nation ought to have of all its Neighbours, so far as to be always upon its Guard against every one of them ; upon that Occasion the French were as much alarm’d upon our marching Troops down towards our Coasts next to them, as we were upon the marching of theirs.

‘ As in all Treaties there are some Points left to be determined afterwards, according to the Plan then laid down ; so, Sir, by the Treaty of Seville the Spaniards are to make full Satisfaction and Reparation for the Losses which our Merchants have sustained by any unjust Seizures ; but as the *Quantum* of that Loss could not then be determined, nor could it then be determined what Seizures were lawful and what not, therefore it was absolutely necessary to leave that Affair to be inquired into and determined by Commissaries mutually appointed ; and we have all the Reason in the World to expect, that we shall at last meet with a full Satisfaction in that Affair, though it has been hitherto retarded by the Negotiations about publick Affairs of greater Moment, which have occurred since the Conclusion of that Treaty. In all human Affairs, it is sometimes necessary to have Patience, and to wait the Course of Things ; Nations must not, upon every little Delay, or upon every trifling Dispute, come to an open Rupture, and involve themselves and their Neighbours in War and Bloodshed for Things, which with a little Patience might have been easily adjusted.

Anno 5. Geo. II.
1731-32.

I should not, Sir, have troubled the House any farther ; but that since Comparisons have been going round, I hope I may have leave to make one in my Turn ; and I must say, that our late Affairs very much resemble a Set of honest quiet Country People got into a Country Dance, who went through their Dance with a great deal of Ease and Alacrity, 'till a turbulent noisy Fellow came in among them, who immediately forced himself into the Dance, and made such a Noise, that such a one was out, and such a one not right, such a Step out of Tune, and such a Turn not according to Rule, that they could not go on with their Dance ; but at last they resolved to turn this troublesome Fellow out of Company, and then they all went on easily and quietly as they had done before.

An Address re-
solv'd on.

At last the Question was put upon the Lord Hervey's Motion, which was carried in the Affirmative without any Division ; and a Committee was appointed to draw up an Address accordingly, which is as follows :

The Address.

Most gracious Sovereign,

WE your Majesty's most loyal and dutiful Subjects, the Commons of Great-Britain in Parliament assembled, beg Leave to return your Majesty our most humble Thanks for your most gracious Speech from the Throne.

It is the highest Satisfaction to your faithful Commons, to see the general Tranquility of Europe restored and established by your Majesty's Credit and Influence, which reflects the greatest Glory to the British Crown, and of Consequence to the British Nation ; the Honour and Interest of which are always inseparable.

We are fully persuaded, that the Treaties your Majesty has enter'd into, were made with no other View, than to preserve the Balance of Power in Europe, and secure the Possessions of the Crown of Great-Britain, and all the Rights and Privileges we are intitled to ; and we acknowledge with Gratitude your Majesty's Wisdom and Goodness, in procuring for us all these Advantages, without the Expence and Hazards of a War.

We are very sensible of the many Difficulties, which your Majesty labour'd under, in bringing this great and glorious Work to so happy a Conclusion. The many Obstacles arising from various Pretensions and Jealousies during the Course of these Transactions, unfurmoutable as they have been thought, are by your Majesty's Steadiness and Prudence entirely removed ; and at a Time, when a War seemed unavoidable, the Settlement of the Succession of Don Carlos to the States of Tuscany and Parma has been
‘ peaceably’

‘ peaceably accomplished, and the general Tranquillity of Europe preserved by the Weight and Credit of your Majesty’s Negotiations. Anno 5. Geo. 12.
1731-32.

‘ Thus has your Majesty extricated not only this Nation, but all Europe out of the uncertain State for many Years laboured under, and that by Means most honourable to your Majesty, consistent with all former Engagements, and without the least Injury to any Prince or Power in Europe.

‘ And we humbly assure your Majesty, that having the truest Sense of the many Blessings we have enjoyed during the Course of your Majesty’s Reign, and how much our present Happiness is owing to your paternal Love and Care for your People, we will with the greatest Chearfulness grant the necessary Supplies for the current Service of the Year; and your Majesty will always find such Returns of Duty and Gratitude from us, as the best of Kings may expect from the most loyal Subjects, fully convinced that the only End of your Majesty’s auspicious Government, is the Protection and Prosperity of your People.’

To this Address his Majesty gave the following Answer.

Gentlemen,

‘ I Return you my Thanks for this dutiful and loyal Address. I make no Doubt of the Continuance of your Duty, Affection and Confidence in me; and you will always find that all my Views tend to the Honour, Interest, and Security of my Crown and People.’ The King’s Answer
Secret.

January 18. The House of Commons resolv’d to grant a Supply to his Majesty, and the usual Estimates were laid before them. A Supply voted.

Jan. 25. Mr Sandys presented to the House a Bill, for making more effectual the Laws in Being for disabling Persons from being chosen Members of, or sitting or voting in the House of Commons, who have any Pension during Pleasure, or for any Number of Years, or any Offices held in Trust for them; which was received and read a first Time, and ordered to be read a second Time. The Pension-Bill
brought in.

Jan. 26. The Commons being in a Grand Committee on the Supply, Sir * William Strickland mov’d, ‘ That the Number of effective Men, for Guards and Garrisons in Great-Britain, and for Guernsey and Jersey for the Year 1732, should be, including 1315 Invalids, and 555 Men when the Debate on the
Number of Land
Forces.
Sir W. Strickland.

* Appointed Secretary at War, May 8, 1740, in the room of the late Henry Pelham, then made Paymaster-General of his Majesty’s Forces.

Anno 5. Geo. II.
1731-32.

the six Independent Companies consist of for the Service of the Highlands, 17,709 Men, Commission and Non-Commission Officers included. In Support of this Motion he endeavoured to shew, 'That though the publick Tranquility was happily and fully established, yet it was necessary for us to keep up at least the Number of Troops he had proposed, till we should see how those Measures, by which the Publick Tranquility had been established, should be approved of by the other Powers of Europe, who had not then declared their Sentiments upon that Subject.'

Lord Morpeth.

Hereupon Lord Morpeth stood up, and having shewed how dangerous it was to the Liberties of this Nation, to keep up a numerous Standing Army in Time of Peace; his Lordship moved 'That the Number should be reduced to 12,000 effective Men; and was back'd by Mr Watkin Williams Wynne: But they were oppos'd by the Lord Hervey, who spoke next as follows,

Mr Watkin Williams Wynne.

Lord Hervey.

Sir,

Though the Peace and Tranquility of this Nation, both abroad and at home, be now by his Majesty's wise Conduct established, in all Probability, upon a firm and lasting Foundation, yet a wise People ought always to be upon their Guard against the worst that may happen. The Publick Quiet both abroad and at home depends upon the Views and Inclinations of Men; and we know by Experience, that nothing is more fickle and variable; we ought not therefore to do any Thing that may turn the Inclinations of our Enemies towards disturbing us, or that may give them any Views of Success in any such Attempts; the only Method to prevent the having any such Inclinations, or conceiving any such Hopes, is to keep up a good Army of regular Forces. The Number moved for, is, in my Opinion, the least that can be thought of by any Man, who has a true Regard for the Quiet and Prosperity of this Nation, and for the Preservation of the Protestant Succession in his Majesty's most illustrious Family.

Every Man knows, Sir, and every Man ought to reflect upon it with Concern, that we never did yet reduce our Army, but that Reduction was the Occasion of some Plot or Machination against us: Did not the small Number of our Forces, in the Beginning of his late Majesty's Reign, spirit up and encourage that wicked and unnatural Rebellion that was raised against him? After that Insurrection was happily quelled, we made a Reduction of the Army, what were the Consequences? The Army was no sooner reduced, but our Enemies began to think of taking Advantage of it; we were not only threatened with a new Insurrection at home, but likewise with an Invasion from Spain. [See Vol. I. p. 374.]

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By good Management and good Luck, their Attempts were frustrated, their Hopes were rendered abortive ; and when we found ourselves quiet and easy, we again reduced our Army. This Reduction revived again the Hopes of our Enemies, they began again to plot and to cabal against us, under the Management, and by the Advice of the late Bishop of Rochester ; [See Vol. I. p. 301.] but their Schemes were defeated by a timely and seasonable Discovery, and the wicked Authors suffered the most moderate Punishment that the Justice of the Nation could inflict.

Anno 5. Geo. II.

1731-32.

‘ Though every Thing be at present quiet and easy, yet we must not imagine that we have no Enemies, or that they have lost their former Watchfulness ; as long as we have a good and brave Army for our Support, they know they dare not break out into any open Acts of Violence : But the many scandalous and seditious Libels that are every Day published against the Government, and the many Scribblers that are employ’d to vilify and asperse his Majesty and his Administration, and to sow Disaffection and Discontent among the People, is an evident Sign that we have as yet many Enemies, even within our Bosom, who would probably think of making use of other Weapons than the Pen, if we should be so unwise as to afford them the least Hopes of Success, by making a great Reduction in our Army ; and therefore I am for continuing the Army, for this Year at least, upon the Footing that was first propos’d.

Lord Hervey having done speaking, Mr Walter Plomer replied, ‘ That the most weighty Argument made use of by the noble Lord, seem’d to be, that there was a great Number of Scribblers employ’d to write against the Government ; but for his part, he could not see why that was a sufficient Reason for keeping up a Standing Army of Soldiers. If Scribbling gave the Government any Uneasiness, or made them dream of Danger, he thought the best Way would be to employ an Army of Scribblers to defend them, for he did not doubt but a sufficient Number of such might be found, who would list upon that Side where they expected they could make the most Advantage.

Mr Walt. Plomer;

Sir * William Yonge then spoke as follows,

Sir W. Yonge;

Mr Speaker,

‘ The Question now before us is not any way relating to the Preservation or the Loss of our Liberties ; we are not to suppose, we cannot suppose, that his Majesty is to employ the Forces we are to keep on foot in any illegal Way ; or that he is to make use of them, or of any other

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Means

* Appointed a Lord of the Treasury, May 8, 1730, in the room of Sir Charles Turner, made a Teller of the Exchequer.

Anno 5. Geo. II.
1731-32.

Means to encroach upon the Liberties of our Country. We have had sufficient Experience of his Majesty's Wisdom and Goodness not to entertain the least Suspicion of any such Design; all that his Majesty wants is, that we will take a Care to keep up a Parliamentary Force, sufficient for enabling him to repel any Attack that may be made upon our Country, or upon our Constitution. His Majesty desires nothing but what may be necessary for preserving us in the happy and quiet State in which we are at present, and for continuing and protecting the free Enjoyment of those Liberties and Privileges for which he has always shewn so great a Regard. While this is the Use that is to be made of our Standing-Army, I cannot think that the Number proposed is at all too large, and if any other Use were to be made of them, I hope, I should be as ready as any Man in this House to oppose any such Measures; but as long as the Continuance of the Army depends upon the Resolutions of Parliament from Year to Year, there is, I think, no Danger of any such Measures being entered upon, or ever so much as thought of; the Parliament will always have it in their Power to put a Stop to such Measures in their Infancy, and long before they can be made effectual, or so much as brought to any Maturity; and I hope it never will be imagined, that the Parliament will join in any Measures for enslaving the People.

‘ The present Question is not, whether we shall establish a Standing Army to continue for ever, or for any Term of Years? It is only about continuing the Number now proposed for one Year longer, till we see how the Treaties we have lately made are relished by some foreign Powers: If they should happen not to approve of the Measures we have taken for establishing the general Good and Tranquility of Europe, our keeping up of our Standing Army will prevent them from taking any Measures for disturbing that Peace and Tranquility so lately settled and established; as long as they find that we are in a Capacity to compel their Consent, they will at least dissemble and conceal their Dislike. If at the Expiration of the ensuing Year we find, that all the other Powers of Europe are quiet and easy; if we then find that they are willing to rest satisfied with those Measures which have been agreed upon, we may then lessen the Number of our Forces if we think fit, and one Year's Expence of maintaining 5 or 6000 Men, is but a Trifle in comparison with the Loss this Nation may sustain, by exposing Europe and itself to the Danger of a new War.

‘ It is well known, Sir, how fatal it was to Europe, how fatal it was to this Nation in particular, the Disbanding of our Army after the Peace of Ryfwick; King William had too
much

much Wisdom and Penetration not to foresee the Consequences of so wrong a Step, and therefore he opposed it with all his Might ; but his well founded Reasons could not prevail against the Spirit of that Faction and Party, which was so troublesome to him during his whole Reign, and prevented this Nation's reaping all those Advantages it might have done from his prudent Administration. After this mischievous Resolution was carried against him, and the brave Army, which he had been at so much Pains to discipline and train up, was in Pursuance thereof disbanded, he saw himself in no Condition to oppose or prevent the French King's taking Possession of the whole Kingdom of Spain, upon the Demise of the then King, who was even at that Time in so lingering a Condition, that his Death was every Day expected, which made the Resolution for disbanning our Army at so critical a Juncture the more ridiculous ; therefore King William found himself under a Sort of Necessity of entering into the Partition Treaty, which was afterwards so much censured in this House, and was certainly a Treaty that he never would have agreed to, but only that he thought it was necessary to give the French a small Part of the Spanish Dominions, in order to prevent their getting hold of the Whole.

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‘ We have seen, Sir, the good Effects of agreeing with his Majesty in the Measures he proposed for bringing about the Re-establishment of the Peace and Tranquility of Europe ; I am persuaded, that the Continuing of the Hessian Troops in our Pay was one of the principal Causes of the Success of his Majesty's Negotiations, and I think the Event has justified me and every one who agreed with his Majesty in that Measure ; as I was then of Opinion, that the Continuing of the Hessian Troops in our Pay was absolutely necessary for bringing about those good Ends which have been thereby effectuated, so now I am of Opinion, that the keeping up the Number of our own Forces proposed, is a Measure that is absolutely necessary for preserving that Tranquility which is but just established.

‘ But if there were no Fears from abroad, if there were no Danger of any Foreign Powers attempting to disturb the Tranquility of Europe, yet the Preservation even of our own Liberties, and of the Protestant Succession, make it necessary to continue the whole Number proposed of our own Troops in our Pay ; for though I am very far from thinking, that the Generality, or that the greatest Part of the People are disaffected, because I always reckon that the Affection of the People is to be measured by the Affection of their Representatives in Parliament ; yet I am sorry to say, that there is still a Spirit of Jacobinism in the Country ;

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though it be at present dormant, it is not quite extinguished, as may appear from the Treatment lately given to a Petition for erecting the Statue of King William*, that great King, who had delivered us from so many Evils, and who had prevented our falling into the most abject Slavery that ever a People were brought into; yet a Petition for erecting a Statue in Memory of this glorious King met with such Contempt, as could not be given by any but those who are most enthusiastically led by that evil Spirit; and while there are any great Remains of that Spirit in the Country, the Government never can be safe, nor can the Peace or Quiet of the Nation be secured, without keeping up such a Number of regular Forces as may deprive such People of all Hopes of Success. For which Reasons, Sir, I shall give my Vote for keeping up the Number of Forces proposed.

Sir W. Wyndham.

Then Sir William Wyndham spoke as follows :

Sir,

‘ It has always been looked on as contrary to the Constitution, and inconsistent with the Liberties of this Country, to keep up a Standing Army in Time of Peace. This is a Maxim that has been handed down to us from our Forefathers, and is certainly as true a Maxim as any that ever was, or ever can be laid down, for the Preservation of our happy Constitution. His Majesty has been most graciously pleased to assure us from the Throne, “ That the Expectations “ He had given us, from Time to Time, of seeing the general “ Tranquility of Europe restored and established, are now fully “ answer’d.” What have we more to expect? do we hope ever to see a Time when all the Powers of Europe will be, even to outward Appearance, so fully satisfied and pleased that no Jealousies nor private Animosities do seem to remain? The Hope is vain, the Thing is impossible, for those very Measures which make one easy will always give some Appearance of Disquiet to another; besides, the Ambition of Princes is such, that no general Satisfaction can be expected, nor can a profound Tranquility be hoped for, to remain for any Time without some Disturbance. Either now is a proper Time for us to reduce a Part of our Army, or such a Time will never happen; and this Nation must always be obliged to be at the Expence of maintaining a numerous regular Army, and lie exposed to have its Liberties and Privileges

* The old Conduit in Cheapside, London, being order’d to be pull’d down, to make that Street more commodious, a Petition was presented to the Common-Council by some Citizens, desiring Leave to erect a Statue of King William in the same Place, at their own sole Expence, which was refus’d: And upon this Occasion, one of the Common-Council made Use of this remarkable Expression, viz. That to consent to such a Request would be only removing one Nuisance to set up another.

vileges trampled upon by the means of that Army, whenever we shall have a King weak or ambitious enough, or a Ministry wicked enough, to engage in such Measures.

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‘ A much less Number, than we have at present, have been found sufficient to guard us both against Invasions from Abroad, and Insurrections at Home, even in the Time of open War : During the whole Course of the long Wars, we had in the Reigns both of King William and Queen Anne, a Body of 6000 or 7000 Men was thought all that was requisite to be kept in this Nation, for guarding us against all the Attempts of our Enemies foreign or domestick ; and this small Body of Men, with the Affections of the People, appeared to be so sufficient for the Purpose designed, that the United Powers of France and Spain never durst venture to make an Invasion upon us ; nay, they never so much as attempted it but once, and then they did it in such a faint Manner as shewed they were afraid of the Success of what they were going about : Yet every one knows what an Advantage it would have then been to the French Cause, if they could have made a Diversion, by landing a Body of Troops in this Island.

‘ After the Peace of Ryfwick the Parliament was then so jealous of their Liberties, and so much afraid of introducing the dangerous Custom of keeping up a Standing Army in time of Peace, that they got the Army disbanded immediately after the Peace was concluded, and they certainly did Right in doing so. There were no fatal Consequences from thence ensued, nor could the Disbanding of our Army give the least Occasion to the Partition-Treaty : Spain was then in a Manner our own, they were upon our Side, and were heartily engaged, or would have engaged, in any tolerable Measures for preventing the French King’s taking Possession of all, or of any Part of their Territories ; but by that pernicious Treaty, which was even before the Conclusion of it, and before the fatal Effects it produced were felt, strenuously opposed by some of our own Ministers, and was afterwards so justly censured in Parliament, the Spaniards were forced to throw themselves into the Arms of France ; they were obliged to accept of the Protection of France, in order to prevent their Monarchy from being rent and torn to Pieces, in pursuance of that ridiculous Scheme agreed upon by the Treaty of Partition. Yet, notwithstanding this false Step by which we lost the whole Monarchy of Spain, we lost nothing by having disbanded our Army ; for immediately upon the War’s breaking out afresh, we, in Conjunction with our Allies, not only raised such an Army as would have been sufficient to have defended Spain, but was found to be an Over-Match for the joint Powers of France and Spain, assisted by their new Ally the Duke of Bavaria, whom we had likewise

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wife disobliged, and thrown into the Scale against us by the Second Partition-Treaty. And considering the great Success of our Arms in this last War, and the small Number of regular Forces we had in Pay before it broke out, I think we may from thence most certainly conclude, that there never can be any Necessity, or really so much as a Pretence, for keeping up such a numerous Standing-Army in time of Peace, as we have at present in the Island of Great Britain alone.

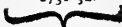
‘ Sir, The brave and bold Spirit which the British Subjects naturally have is well known ; our Enemies have often felt it to their Cost ; I hope the same Spirit still remains, I hope we have Men enough in Britain who have Resolution to defend themselves against any Invasion whatever, though there were not so much as one Red-Coat in the whole Kingdom. It is upon the Bravery of our Subjects, upon the natural Courage of our Men, that we ought principally to depend for the Protection and Safety of our Country against a Foreign Enemy : By trusting to this we have continued for many Years to be a happy and free People, and as soon as we begin to put our Trust in any thing else, our Happiness and our Liberty will be at an End, and a State of Misery and Slavery must soon after ensue.

‘ As to the Disaffection that is pretended to be in the Country, it is nothing but a Pretence, and it will always be a Pretence : I hope, Sir, it is so inconsiderable, that our ordinary Civil Officers are sufficient to seize, and our common Goals capable to hold all the Disaffected in the Kingdom : But I must say that the Continuing of a Standing-Army, even from Year to Year, will certainly make the Disaffection increase, and will make it spread through all Parts of the Kingdom ; the People never can be easy under the Load of Taxes and the many Oppressions, which always are, and always must be, the Consequences of keeping up a numerous Standing-Army in any Country. Our People are naturally jealous of their Liberties ; the Continuing of the Army thus from Year to Year will make them conclude, that they are never to be relieved therefrom by Parliament ; this may make them despair of preserving their Liberty by any peaceable Method, and may make them engage against one another in a cruel Civil War, for the Preservation of those Liberties which they judge to be in imminent Danger : These may be the Consequences, but woe to those Men who advise such Measures as may produce such fatal Effects ! I wish that neither God nor Man may ever pardon the Authors of so much Misery !

‘ We have heard much, Sir, of the Distinction between a Standing Army, and a Parliamentary Army ; for my part, I can see no Difference ; a Standing-Army is a Standing Army

Army, let it be authorized by Parliament or not; the People may meet with the same Oppressions from both, and both must be maintained at the People's Expence. I join with the worthy Member, who spoke last, in Opinion, that the Affections of the People ought to be measured by the Affections of their Representatives in Parliament; it has always been so hitherto; the Subjects, when they suspected that the Crown was making any Incroachments upon their Liberties, always pleased themselves with the Thoughts that they would find a sure Redress from their Representatives assembled in Parliament; upon them they always depend for a certain Remedy for all their real or even imaginary Wrongs; but if this House shall thus from Year to Year agree to the Continuance of a Standing-Army, I am afraid this will no longer continue to be a Rule for measuring the Peoples Affections: The People will begin to look upon Us not as their Representatives, or as the Guardians of their Liberties, but as the insignificant Tools of a Court, and the hireling Supporters of an Administration.

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To this Mr Henry Pelham replied, ' That as long as the Army was regularly paid, and strict Discipline kept up, he did not believe that the People could meet with any Injustice from them; and as long as they were subject to be reduced or disbanded by the Parliament, whenever it was thought convenient, they never could be employed against the Liberties and Privileges of the Subjects; therefore he did not believe that the small Number now proposed could ever raise any Discontent or Jealousy in the Minds of the People: But he joined heartily with the honourable Member, who spoke last, in wishing, that neither God nor Man might ever forgive those, who were or should be the Occasion of our being obliged to fight for our Liberties; yet the Case, he said, had happened; we had been obliged to fight for our Liberties, and every thing that was dear to us; and yet notwithstanding, many of those, who had been principally the Occasion thereof, had been forgiven at least by Man.'

Mr H. Pelham.

Then Mr Barnard said, ' That he could not agree to the Continuing of the Army upon the Footing proposed, because we had been assured by his Majesty that there was a profound Tranquility abroad; and if there was any Party at home against the Protestant Succession, he was convinced it was so insignificant that it was not worth taking Notice of: That the Setting up, or not Setting up King William's Statue, could be no Argument for proving that there was a Spirit of Jacobinism in the Country: That for his part, he wished that the Proposal had been agreed to, and that the Statue had been set up; but he was sure that the late Opposition that was made to it, and the refusing to set it up in the Place proposed

Mr Barnard.

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proposed, did not proceed from any Disaffection to the Government, or from any Dislike of the Revolution; there were many other Reasons to be assigned for that Refusal, which by the Generality of the People, who were concerned in that Matter, were thought to be of Weight enough to make them give their Negative at that Time.'

Sir P. Yorke.

Sir Philip Yorke spoke next.

Sir,

'It is certainly the Interest of this Nation to render itself as considerable as possible amongst its Neighbours; for the greater Opinion they have of our Strength and Power, the less apt they will be to undertake any Expeditions or Invasions against us, and the more easy it will be for us to obtain from them any Advantages or Immunities, which we may think necessary for improving the Trade and increasing the Riches of the Kingdom. There is nothing contributes more to the Power and Strength of a People than Unanimity and Concord among themselves: A factious divided People are never able to do much good to themselves or their Friends, nor any great Injury to their Enemies and Rivals. The only Thing then, that can make this Nation considerable in the Eyes of Foreigners, is a hearty Union and Agreement between his Majesty and his Parliament; this it is which has produced that happy Tranquility which we now enjoy, and which by our Influence has been communicated to the rest of Europe, and in a Manner forced upon some of the Princes thereof; some of them had Inclination enough to have raised Commotions, and to have disturbed the Peace and Quiet of their Neighbours, but they durst not venture upon it, when they found the King of Great Britain and his Parliament would join heartily in the same Measures against them: It may be supposed that the same Inclinations still remain, they only watch for an Opportunity to follow them; the least Disagreement between his Majesty and his Parliament will afford them what they wish, what they long for, and thereupon the Flames of War will break out afresh; for preserving therefore the Tranquility which by our Influence has been established, it is necessary to continue the Means by which we have been able to accomplish so good a Design, for which Reason I am for agreeing with what has been proposed.'

Mr Wal. Plomer.

Then Mr Walter Plomer, spoke as follows.

Sir,

'If I thought that the Continuing the Number of Forces proposed were necessary for preserving the Publick Tranquility, either at Home or Abroad, or for any other good End whatever, I should join most heartily in the Proposal. It is certain, that the Continuing of so great an Army in time of

of a profound Peace may be of dangerous Consequence to our Constitution; and it always must be oppressive as well as burthenfome to the People; therefore nothing but an absolute Necessity ought to prevail upon us to continue a Standing-Army. From past Times we may be able to form a Judgment of the present; from what has happened heretofore we may judge, whether there be at present any absolute Necessity for keeping up such a Number of Regular Forces. During the whole Time of the late War in the Reign of Queen Anne, there were but 6 or 7000 Men of Regular Forces kept in this Kingdom, and these were found sufficient, though the Pretender was then openly entertained at the French Court, and was but a few Days Journey distant from us; it was then much easier to carry on a Correspondence between him and his Friends in this Country than at present, and it must be supposed that he had more of them than he has now; for by the very Nature of Things they must be daily decreasing, and will at last wear quite out, if wrong Measures at Home do not prevent it; yet notwithstanding the small number of Forces then kept in the Kingdom, they were never able to give the Government any great Disturbance or Uneasiness; therefore I must conclude, that for preventing any Attempts from the Pretender or his Party in the Kingdom, a greater Number is now not absolutely necessary, but is rather quite unnecessary and superfluous.

‘ As soon as that War was at an End our Troops were immediately disbanded, and the Army reduced to about 6000 Men; it was not however at that Time pretended, that it was necessary to keep our Army on Foot till it should be seen how the Treaty we had made should be relished by Foreign Powers, or that there was any Danger of the War’s breaking out afresh in case we should, for the Safety of our Constitution, and the Ease of our People, disband our Regular Forces. Yet I have so great a Respect for her Majesty’s Memory, that I cannot believe she had any Views of favouring the Pretender or his Interest, either at Home or Abroad; and with this small Number of Regular Forces at Home, we found, that not only the general Tranquility of Europe was preserved, but upon the Queen’s Demise the Protestant Succession took Place without the least Disturbance or Opposition. There was, it is true, a Rebellion broke out some Time after, and thereupon the Army was augmented, but that Rebellion was crushed even before the Augmentation was made; the 6000 or 7000 Troops we had in our Pay at Home were found sufficient for suppressing that Insurrection; and notwithstanding this small Number of Forces we had on Foot, and this Insurrection that was at the same Time raised against his late Majesty, yet we find that none of

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the Powers Abroad ever offer'd either to disturb us or any of their Neighbours. Thus we find that in former Times, and that very lately too, the Publick Tranquility has been preserved, both Abroad and at Home, by a little more than one Third of the Regular Forces now propos'd to be kept on Foot ; for what End then can such a Number be propos'd, or for what Reason should we agree to it ? For my part, I can find none, but very strong Reasons for opposing it as much as lies in my Power.

‘ I must say, Sir, that it is not to the Diminution or Reduction of our Regular Forces, that any Attempts against us ever were, or ever can be owing ; such Attempts, either by Invasions or Insurrections, must always arise from our Government's pursuing Measures by which Disaffection and Discontent are sowed among the People ; when the People are generally disaffected, the Malecontents will gather Confidence from their Numbers ; and our Neighbours will, upon every Occasion, be ready to invade us, when they are sure of meeting with a powerful Support and Assistance from the People themselves. There is no one Measure more apt to spread a general Disaffection among the People than that of keeping up a numerous Standing Army ; this was one of the principal Things that ruin'd the late King James, and alienated from him the Peoples Affections almost to a Man : He had to trust to even a more numerous Army than that at present demanded ; but what was the Consequence ? That Army was so far from securing him against the general Discontent of the People, that they themselves, like honest Men as they were, joined in the general Defection, and contributed to the Overthrow of the Man who unjustly put his whole Trust and Confidence in them. I hope, Sir, that the English Armies will always behave so ; I hope they will always be so faithful to their Country as to forsake the Man who has a Mind to enslave it ; but this is not to be depended on ; however, the Example shews that any Army breeds Disaffection among the People, and that even an Army cannot be much depended on by that King, who by putting his whole Confidence in them, has incurred the Displeasure of the People. Therefore from the sincere Affection I have for the present Establishment, I must be against continuing such a great Number of Regular Forces in this Kingdom.

Mr * Horatio Walpole spoke next.

Sir,

‘ I am sorry to hear a Parallel drawn by any Member of this House, between the Army kept up by the late King James

Mr H. Walpole.

* *Appointed Cofferer of his Majesty's Household, May 1. 1730.*

James, and the Army intended to be kept up at present : King James's Army was raised against Law, was maintained against the Consent of the People, and was employ'd in overturning the Liberties of the People : The present Question is about an Army which is to be kept up, according to Law, and by and with the Consent and Approbation of the People. If we look into the *Petition of Right* itself, what does it say ? why that an Army raised or kept up, without Consent of Parliament, is contrary to the Constitution ; but it was never said, that an Army kept up by Consent of Parliament is illegal, or any way contrary to our happy Constitution ; in this Respect therefore no Parallel can be drawn between the present Army, which is to be kept up only by Consent of the People, and maintained by them, and that Army which was rais'd and maintain'd by King James himself, and was so far from being with the Concurrence or Consent of the People, that it was to be employed against them ; and I am persuaded, that no Man here suspects that the present Army is to be employed in any such Manner.

' I really believe, Sir, and I hope I am right, that there is but very little Dissatisfaction in the Nation, and that the Jacobite Party is now become very inconsiderable ; but still that Party is not to be ridiculed and made a Joke of : We are not so much to despise all Attempts that may be made by them, as not to take any Measures to provide ourselves against them ; such a Security is the best Thing they can wish for ; they would be glad to be despised in such a Manner. Gentlemen may say what they will of the little Consequence of any Endeavours that have been, or may be used by them ; but the late Rebellion is a certain Testimony that they are not to be too much despised. The Fate of the Kingdom was at that Time brought even to the Decision of a Day, and if the Rebels had been successful but at Preston, I do not know what might have been the Consequences ; I dread to think of them : But let them have been never so fatal, if the Liberties of this Nation had been overthrown by the Success of those Rebels, it would have been entirely owing to our having so few Regular Forces on Foot at that Time. We have escaped that Danger, but do not let us expose ourselves every Day to such Dangers for the future, which must be the necessary Consequence of reducing any Part of the small Army now on Foot, and desired to be continued.

' A Parliamentary Army never yet did any Harm to this Nation, but Reductions of that Army have often been fatal. I have been assured by a Minister of very great Consequence at the Court of France, that the reducing of our Army after the Peace of Ryswick very much encouraged the Court of France to take such Measures, and to make such bold

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Steps as they afterwards did. They would have been more cautious if we had kept ourselves in a Capacity of pouring in a numerous Army upon them ; but they saw that we had put it out of our Power ; and therefore they despised us. The Reduction of the Army after the Treaty of Utrecht had not, by good Luck, all the ill Consequences that were designed, but the Reduction was certainly made with no good Intent. I have a good Opinion enough of the late Queen, she had not, perhaps, any ill Intentions ; but I am convinced that her Ministers had laid a Scheme for overturning the Protestant Succession ; and they had no other Way of executing this Scheme, but by getting free of all those brave Officers and Soldiers who had served their Country so faithfully in the late Wars ; this was what made the Army be reduced at that Time so low as it was : The Ministers knew that those honest Officers would not serve them in the Execution of their destructive Schemes, but they took Care to supply their Place by a Body of above 6000 Men, who were privately kept in Pay, and maintained under colour of Chelsea-Hospital ; and the Consequence shewed what Sort of Men these new Troops were, for almost every Man of them appeared in Arms in the late Rebellion against the Government. We have heard the Treaty of Utrecht, upon which this Reduction was made, applauded by some ; whether it deserves any such Applause I do not know ; but I am certain, that since that Time we have been obliged to enter into separate Treaties and Negotiations almost with every Power in Europe, for amending or explaining the Blunders of that Treaty ; and if we are now right, whoever ascribes our being so to that Treaty, may be said to be like a Man, who after breaking another's Bones, and seeing them set again very right, and well cured by an able Surgeon, cries, You are obliged to me, Sir, for this great Cure that has been performed upon you.

‘ After all, Sir, I would not have the Friends to the present Establishment think themselves absolutely safe and secure ; it is not to be supposed but that his Majesty has still some private Enemies, even in our own Country ; People may say what they will about the Treatment the Petition for erecting King William's Statue lately met with, but I look upon it as an Affront designedly put upon the Revolution ; and I am sure it never could have met with so much Contempt from any thing, but a Spirit of Jacobitism still subsisting in the Country, which can never be destroyed but by taking away from them all Hopes of Success, and this can only be done by keeping up an Army sufficient to defend us against their utmost Efforts.’

Mr

Mr Noel spoke next and said, ' That he approved very much of his Majesty's Speech to both Houses at the Beginning of the Session ; he was glad to observe, that his Majesty therein declared, in so strong Terms, his Affection for his People, but from the Motion that had been made for such a Number of Troops, he thought the Speech ought to have concluded with these Words, That his Majesty, to shew his Affection for his People, would quarter upon them for next Year but 18,000 Men.'

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Mr Noel.

After him Mr Shippen stood up, and spoke as follows :

Mr Shippen:

Mr Speaker,

' I see this Question in the same Light with those Gentlemen, who are of Opinion that the Determination of it will shew the People of Great-Britain, whether they are to enjoy their Civil Constitution, with all its Rights and Privileges, or to endure a Military Government, with all its Inconveniences and Oppressions.

' However harsh this Assertion may sound, it is so well founded, that if we cannot now hope for a Reduction of the Army, we may for ever despair of it. For this is the Conjecture, this is the Crisis, when the People of Great-Britain may with Reason and Justice expect, I had almost said demand, an Exemption from every unnecessary Tax ; and as none is more grievous at all times, so none seems to be more unnecessary at this Time, than that which is occasioned by maintaining an Extraordinary Number of Land-Forces. Such an Exemption must be acceptable to his Majesty, who hath been most graciously pleased to open this Session with declaring, " That it is a Pleasure to him to give Ease to " his Subjects, whenever the Welfare of the Publick will admit of it."

' Sir, There can be no doubt, but the Welfare of the Publick will now admit of reducing our Expences on the Head of the Army. For we have the same Royal Assurance, That the general Tranquility of Europe is fully restored and established ; that all the jarring and contending Powers are united, all the different Views of Interest and Ambition reconciled, by his Majesty's extensive Influence, and consummate Wisdom ; that the Wounds, which have been long bleeding, are entirely cured, by his healing Hand ; that Peace and good Harmony are returned together ; that the Duty and Affection of his Subjects, are all he desires for his Paternal Love and Concern for them ; that his Government has no other Security, but what is equally conducive to their Happiness.

' This is the Situation, which his Majesty promises himself will inspire us with such a seasonable Zeal for the Publick Good, as becomes a Parliament sensible of the Blessings they enjoy.

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enjoy. And Imagination cannot form a more pleasing Idea, a more perfect Plan of National Prosperity, than what is here described. Nor could a good and gracious Prince bring better Tidings, or communicate more welcome News from the Throne, to a Free People.

‘ Since then his Majesty has so gloriously performed his Part, let us not be wanting on ours. Let us take the earliest Opportunity of convincing those we represent, that they are immediately to reap the Fruit of his Royal Labours, and that all their Grievances will be gradually redressed. Let us begin with reducing the Army, and making them sensible, that it is not intended they should any longer bear the Burthen and Inconveniencies of War, in a Day of profound Peace, and universal Tranquility.

‘ If we fail in this great Point, the People, who did not resign their Understandings, when they delegated their Power to us, know they have a Right to judge for themselves. They will not be imposed upon by Appearances. They will be apt, notwithstanding all the fine Words they hear, and all the fine Speeches they read, to call this boasted Success, these promised Blessings, no more than a mere Delusion, a golden Dream, a chimerical and visionary Scene of Happiness.

‘ I wish therefore the honourable Person, who moved this Question, and the other Gentlemen who have been his Co-Adjutors in the Support of it, had been a little more explicit. I wish instead of amusing the Committee, with a Detail of the various Reductions of our Forces from the Treaty of Ryswick down to this Day, and assigning wrong Causes and Consequences to each of those Reductions; instead of assuring us, that, to their own private Knowledge, the Officers of the Army had frequently, on extraordinary Occasions, assisted the Civil Magistrates in the Execution of their Duty; instead of reviving the old exploded Argument of Disaffection and Jacobitism; I wish, instead of rambling so widely from the Point in Debate, they would have dealt more candidly with their Audience, and told us plainly, whether they think a Standing Land-Force will always be necessary to preserve and secure our present happy Settlement; or whether they think the Civil Constitution of this Kingdom, so weakly, and so imperfectly framed, as to want something of the Military Power to strengthen and sustain it. If they entertain the first of these Notions, they must give me Leave to take Notice, that such an Insinuation is unjust, and the Argument odious, since it is a very gross Reflection on our present happy Settlement, which is founded on the Principles of Liberty; and which you know, Sir, was intended to rectify all the Errors, and to reform all the Abuses

Abuses of preceding Reigns. I say, it is a very gross Reflection on our present Settlement, to suppose that his Majesty cannot wear his Crown with Safety, but by burthening the Nation with the constant Charge of maintaining near 18,000 Men; but by establishing a Force, which will perpetually interfere with the Liberty of his Subjects, and consequently shake the Foundation of his Throne. For, however changeable the Counsels and Actions of Ministers may be, the Nature of Things is permanent, and it is impossible, that what has been the constant, the certain Cause of Destruction to other Governments, should, by any new Schemes, by any Refinements in Politicks, be made the sole, or at least the chief, Security of his Majesty's Crown. 'Tis true indeed, that the Parliament has of late Years consented to keep up an Extraordinary Number of Troops in Time of Peace, for Reasons better known to those who gave their Consent, than to me who opposed them when they did so: But it has never yielded up, or renounced, that Fundamental Maxim, *viz.* That a Land-Force in England ought to be considered as the Creature of Necessity, which should not be allowed to subsist one Moment longer, than the Exigences of the State require.

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‘ If they entertain the second Notion, they are equally mistaken in that, as in the first; for it is a Notion highly injurious to our Constitution, which was so happily compounded in its original Formation, that it can receive no Addition or Alteration, without Prejudice. There is so close, so just a Connexion betwixt all the Parts of it, that if any One should be made independent of the rest, it would destroy that Symmetry, which is essential to the Whole, and which distinguishes it from all other Constitutions. The Crown, though limited, is armed with Prerogative and Power, sufficient, as well to defend itself, as to protect its Subjects. The People are possessed of Rights and Privileges, in as extensive a Degree, as is consistent with the Nature of Monarchy, and those Rights and Privileges are secured to them by the strongest and most sacred Obligations. Nay, this Notion is not only injurious, but impracticable; for what I have frequently advanced here must be universally allowed, that the Civil and Military Power cannot subsist long together; and it is easy to foretel which will at last prevail, which will at last assume the sole Dominion. We see the fatal Effects of such a Conjunction in those Kingdoms, where Armies tyrannize, and where Senates servilely obey.

‘ Now God forbid, that the delightful View, the glorious Prospect which his Majesty has opened to his Subjects, of their present envied Condition, and of their future unspeakable Felicities, should terminate in Confusion and Calamity.

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God forbid, that any Compliance, any Resolution of ours should endanger, or alter the best constituted, the best balanced Government in Europe. For as it is the Glory of our Ancestors, that they have maintained it in Opposition to all the Attempts of Innovation, and that they have transmitted it entire to their Posterity; so it will be a Mark of eternal Infamy to that Generation, in whose Time it shall happen, either by the Ambition of the Prince, or by the Treachery of the Ministry, or by the Slavishness of the People, to be surrendered, or destroyed.

‘ But I forbear running into general Arguments. I forbear too answering the Distinctions, which have been made, betwixt Parliament-Armies and Crown-Armies. For, by what Epithets soever distinguished, or by what Authority soever raised or allowed, Armies are in their Nature the same, and the Danger of continuing them the same, as I have formerly endeavoured to prove, when the Ministry required for many Sessions an extraordinary Number of Land-Forces, only because they had by their Negligence, or by their Insufficiency, so encumbered and embarrassed the Publick Affairs, that they wanted a stronger Guard, a more effectual Support to secure their Administration, than their own Wisdom and Conduct.

‘ But the Case is altered, and his Majesty has extricated us out of all the Difficulties, out of the long unsettled State of Affairs, in which his Ministers had involved us. I therefore rest the whole Debate on the Circumstances we are said to be in at this Day, and in that View I take it to be impossible for any one, who is a Well-wisher to the true and ancient Constitution of this Kingdom, to vote for the Question as it now stands. I submit indeed to the Amendment made by a noble Lord, [*Lord Morpeth*] for a smaller Number of Forces than was at first proposed, I mean for 12,000 rather than near 18,000 Men, only as it is the *minus Malum*, and not because I think that Number now necessary for our Preservation, nor because I think any Number ought ever to be admitted into our Establishment, or considered as a Part of our Constitution, on any Pretence whatsoever.’

Sir R. Walpole.

Sir Robert Walpole stood up next, and made the following Speech :

Sir,

‘ I find the Gentlemen, who oppose the Motion made by my honourable Friend, have all along argued, as if the Number of Forces now proposed were to be kept up against Law, or to continue for ever; whereas the very Design of the Motion made to this House is, in order to have a Law for keeping them up; and all that the Gentleman wants by his Motion is, that they shall be continued for this Year only.

The

The Case then before us is, whether it will be more proper, and more for the Benefit of the Nation, to keep up the Number propos'd for one Year, or by an ill-timed Frugality to reduce some Part of them, and thereby expose the Nation to be contemned and despised by our Neighbours round us, and that at a Time when the Publick Tranquility is but just settled, and before we can know whether some of our neighbouring Powers are satisfied or not. Nations, as well as private Men, must accommodate their Measures to the Times they live in. The Circumstances of Europe are now much altered from what they were in former Days; but a very few Ages ago there was no such Thing in Europe as what we now call a Standing-Army; there was nothing but the Militia in any Country, and therefore it was no way necessary for us to have any Thing else. If we quarrell'd with any of our Neighbours, we were sure they had nothing but Militia to bring against us, our Militia was, and I hope is still as good as theirs, but I do not believe that any Man will say, that the Militia of any Country can be made fully as good as Regular Troops bred up to Discipline, and accustomed to Command for many Years; the Thing is impossible, and is so look'd on by all the Powers of Europe: There is not now a Sovereign State in Europe, but keeps a Body of Regular Troops in their Pay; there are none of our Neighbours but what keep a much greater Number than we do; and therefore it is become in a manner absolutely necessary for us to keep some; we must have some Regular Troops to oppose to those that may upon a sudden Emergency be brought against us, and to obstruct and oppose their Passage till we have Time to raise more: The only Question is, how great a Number we ought to keep, and in what Manner they are to be kept up, and so as not to be dangerous to our Constitution?

' As to the preventing of any Danger arising from the Regular Forces kept up, I do not think there can be a better Method propos'd, than that of keeping them up only by Authority of Parliament, and continuing them only from Year to Year; by this Method, Sir, they must always be dependent upon, and subservient to the Parliament or People, and consequently can never be made use of for any Thing, but for the Preservation and Safety of the People against all Attempts foreign and domestick; and while they are kept up in this Manner, they will always be a Terror to our Enemies, without subjecting us to any of those Misfortunes which other Countries have fallen into. A Standing Army, I find, is represented by some Gentlemen, who have spoke upon the other Side of the Question, as not to be depended on even by the King, whose Service they are in.

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I grant that an Army of British Subjects, whatever Way kept up or modelled, is not to be trusted to by a King who makes any Attempts upon the Liberties of the People ; but if such an Army, raised and maintained without Consent of Parliament was, we find, not to be trusted to by a King who had such Designs, how much less can any Man depend for the Execution of such Designs upon an Army such as we have at present ? An Army raised, kept up, and maintained by the People ; an Army that may be dismissed by them when they please ; and an Army that is commanded by Gentlemen of some of the best Estates and Families amongst us, who never can be supposed capable of joining in any Measures for enslaving a Country, where they have so great an Interest, and where their Ancestors have so often signalized themselves in the Cause of Liberty. It is not therefore to be imagined, that ever such an Army can be of any dangerous Consequence to our Liberties, were they much more numerous than they are proposed to be.

‘ It is certain, that every State in Europe now measures the Strength of their Neighbours by the Number of Regular Troops they can bring into the Field ; the Number, or even the Bravery of any Militia is not now much regarded, and therefore the Influence and the Credit that every State in Europe has, or can expect in the publick Negotiations thereof, depends entirely upon the Number of Regular Troops they can command upon any Emergency ; we must therefore conclude, that if we reduce the Number of our Forces, our Influence Abroad will decrease ; our Enemies will begin to imagine, that they may catch great Advantages of us, or at least of our Allies, before we can be in a Condition to afford any considerable Assistance to our Friends, or do any great Injury to them ; upon which Account I cannot think it prudent to make any great Reduction of our Army, before the Treaties, we have made for establishing the Tranquility of Europe, are fully and absolutely secured by such Alliances, as may make the Execution of what we have stipulated and agreed upon, certain and indisputable.

‘ But even as to our Security at Home, I do not think, Sir, that it can bear any Reduction at present ; we do not know what sudden and unexpected Attempts may be made upon us ; and notwithstanding the great Army we have, as is pretended, at present, it is certain that we could not in several Weeks Time bring 5000 Men of Regular Forces together in any Part of the Island, for opposing any Invasion that may happen to be made upon us, without stripping our Capital, and leaving it without any Defence against its open or secret Enemies. Those who tell us, that there were no more than 7000 Men in England during the Course of the late

late War, forget that we had at that Time 4000 or 5000 Men in Scotland, and had all along a great Army Abroad at our Command, which we could bring over when we pleas'd, and did actually bring over 10,000 Men from Flanders, immediately upon the first certain Accounts we had that the French designed an Invasion in Scotland, which made the Number of Regular Forces then in the Island above 20,000, and shews that we were very far from relying upon the 7000 Men, we then had in England, for our sole Defence in the Time of Danger : Besides, we ought to consider that the King of France was then wholly taken up in defending his own Territories, and settling his Son in the Possession of the Spanish Monarchy ; he had not Time to think of the Pretender, nor could he spare any Troops for making an Invasion upon us.

Whereas, should that Nation, or any other begin now to have a Quarrel with us ; the first Thing they would probably do, would be to endeavour to steal in the Pretender upon us with a good Body of Regular Troops ; which Attempt they will always be the more ready to make, the fewer Regular Forces we have at Home to oppose them : We have now no Army Abroad at our Command ; our Allies might perhaps have no more than were absolutely necessary for the Defence of their own Territories, and though they had, we know what a tedious Affair it is before they can be brought over to our Assistance ; we cannot therefore properly put our Trust in any but those which we have within the Island, and the Number proposed is the smallest we can trust to, till the Affairs of Europe be so settled, as that we can be in no Danger of an Attack.

I must take Notice, Sir, that all those who are professed Enemies to our Constitution, and to the Protestant Succession, exclaim loudly against a Standing Army : There is not, I believe, a Jacobite in the Land, but what appears strenuously against the keeping up so great a Number of Regular Forces : I must, Sir, upon this Occasion, acquaint you with a Story that happened to me but the other Day. Some Bills having been lately sent over from Ireland for his Majesty's Approbation, and among them one against the Papists of that Kingdom ; Counsel were admitted to be heard for and against the Bill : In arguing of this Matter, it happened that the Counsel for the Papists had Occasion to refer to the Articles of Limerick, and therefore wanted them to be read ; but there being no Copy of them then at the Counsel Board, their Solicitor, who was a Papist, pulled a little Book out of his Pocket, and from thence read the Articles : I supposed that this little Book was his *Vade Mecum*, and therefore I desired to look upon it, and found that it contain'd those

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Articles of Limerick, the French King's Declaration against the States of Holland in the Year 1701, and three Arguments against a Standing Army ; from whence I concluded, that this Solicitor was a notable Holderforth in Coffee-Houses against the pernicious Consequences of a Standing Army ; and I do not doubt, but that if he were a Member of this House, he would be one of the keenest among us against the present Question : For which Reason, Sir, I shall glory in being one of those that are for it.'

Mr W. Pulteney.

To this Mr William Pulteney replied as follows :

Sir,

' We have heard a great deal about Parliamentary Armies, and about an Army continued from Year to Year ; I have always been, Sir, and always shall be against a Standing Army of any Kind ; to me it is a terrible Thing, whether under that of Parliamentary or any other Designation ; a Standing Army is still a Standing Army, whatever Name it be called by ; they are a Body of Men distinct from the Body of the People ; they are governed by different Laws ; blind Obedience, and an entire Submission to the Orders of their Commanding Officer is their only Principle. The Nations around us, Sir, are already enslaved, and have been enslaved by those very Means ; by Means of their Standing Armies they have every one lost their Liberties ; it is indeed impossible that the Liberties of the People can be preserved, in any Country where a numerous Standing Army is kept up. Shall we then take any of our Measures from the Examples of our Neighbours ? No, Sir, upon the contrary, from their Misfortunes we ought to learn to avoid those Rocks upon which they have split.

' It signifies nothing to tell me, that our Army is commanded by such Gentlemen as cannot be supposed to join in any Measures for enslaving their Country ; it may be so ; I hope it is so ; I have a very good Opinion of many Gentlemen now in the Army ; I believe they would not join in any such Measures ; but their Lives are uncertain, nor can we be sure how long they may be continued in Command ; they may be all dismissed in a Moment, and proper Tools of Power put in their Room. Besides, Sir, we know the Passions of Men, we know how dangerous it is to trust the best of Men with too much Power ; where was there a braver Army than that under Julius Cæsar ? Where was there ever an Army that had served their Country more faithfully ? That Army was commanded generally by the best Citizens of Rome, by Men of great Fortune and Figure in their Country ; yet that Army enslaved their Country. The Affections of the Soldiers towards their Country, the Honour and Integrity of the Under-Officers, are not to be depended on ;

on ; by the Military Law, the Administration of Justice is so quick, and the Punishments so severe, that neither Officer or Soldier dares offer to dispute the Orders of his supreme Commander ; he must not consult his own Inclinations : If an Officer were commanded to pull his own Father out of this House, he must do it ; he dares not disobey ; immediate Death would be the sure Consequence of the least Grumbling. And if an Officer were sent into the Court of Requests, accompanied by a Body of Musketeers with screwed Bayonets, and with Orders to tell us what we ought to do, and how we were to vote, I know what would be the Duty of this House ; I know it would be our Duty to order the Officer to be taken and hanged up at the Door of the Lobby : But, Sir, I doubt much if such a Spirit could be found in the House, or in any House of Commons that will ever be in England.

‘ Sir, I talk not of imaginary Things ; I talk of what has happened to an English House of Commons, and from an English Army, not only from an English Army, but an Army that was raised by that very House of Commons, an Army that was paid by them, and an Army that was commanded by Generals appointed by them ; therefore, do not let us vainly imagine, that an Army raised and maintained by Authority of Parliament will always be submissive to them : If an Army be so numerous as to have it in their Power to overawe the Parliament, they will be submissive as long as the Parliament does nothing to disoblige their Favourite General ; but when that Case happens, I am afraid that instead of the Parliament’s dismissing the Army, the Army will dismiss the Parliament, as they have done heretofore. Nor does the Legality or Illegality of that Parliament, or of that Army, alter the Case, for with respect to that Army, and according to their way of Thinking, the Parliament dismissed by them was a legal Parliament ; they were an Army raised and maintained according to Law, and at first they were raised, as they imagined, for the Preservation of those Liberties which they afterwards destroy’d.

‘ It has been urged, Sir, that whoever is for the Protestant Succession must be for continuing the Army : For that very Reason, Sir, I am against continuing the Army : I know that neither the Protestant Succession in his Majesty’s most Illustrious House, nor any Succession can ever be safe as long as there is a Standing Army in the Country. Armies, Sir, have no Regard to Hereditary Successions. The first two Cæsars at Rome did pretty well, and found Means to keep their Armies in tolerable Subjection, because the Generals and Officers were all their own Creatures ; but how did it fare with their Successors ? Was not every one of them nam-
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ed by the Army without any Regard to Hereditary Right, or to any Right? A Cocker, a Gardiner, or any Man who happened to raise himself in the Army, and could gain their Affections, was made Emperor of the World: Was not every succeeding Emperor raised to the Throne, or tumbled headlong into the Dust, according to the meer Whim or mad Frenzy of the Soldiers?

‘ We are told, Ho! Gentlemen, but this Army is desired to be continued but for one Year longer, it is not desired to be continued for any Term of Years; how absurd is this Distinction: Is there any Army in the World continued for any Term of Years? Does the most absolute Monarch tell his Army, that he is to continue them for any Number of Years, or any Number of Months? How long have we already continued our Army from Year to Year? And if it thus continues, wherein will it differ from the Standing Armies of those Countries which have already submitted their Necks to the Yoke? We are now come to the Rubicon; our Army is now to be reduced, or it never will; from his Majesty’s own Mouth we are assured of a profound Tranquility Abroad, we know there is one at Home; if this is not a proper Time, if these Circumstances do not afford us a safe Opportunity for reducing at least a Part of our Regular Forces, we never can expect to see any Reduction; and this Nation, already overloaded with Debts and Taxes, must be loaded with the heavy Charge of perpetually supporting a numerous Standing Army; and remain for ever exposed to the Danger of having its Liberties and Privileges trampled upon, by any future King or Ministry, who shall take it in their Heads to do so, and shall take a proper Care to model the Army for that Purpose.’

Then the Question was put, on Sir William Strickland’s Motion, which was agreed to, without any Amendment, by 241 against 171.

Mr Pulteney moves for an Account of what Savings had been made by Vacancies in the Army.

Debate thereon.

Sir W. Strickland.

Jan. 27. Mr William Pulteney moved, ‘ That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, that he would be graciously pleased to give Directions to the proper Officers, to lay before the House an Account of what Commissions in the Army and Governments of Garrisons had been kept vacant, and what Savings had been made thereupon.’ Upon this Sir William Strickland stood up and said, ‘ That no such Account had ever been kept at the War Office; the Custom there was, that when any Officer died, the Commissary certified his Death to that Office, in order that the Pay might be stopp’d; and they never began to issue any Money upon that Account till a new Commission was lodged in that Office.

Sir W. Yonge.

Sir William Yonge added, ‘ That whatever Savings could possibly be upon that Account amounted to such a small

small Sum, that it was a meer Trifle, and was not worth being taken any Notice of by that House.'

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Mr Henry Pelham said, 'That all the Time he had been in that Office, and he believed it was so still, no Commissions were ever kept vacant for any Time; That it was always his Majesty's Custom to fill up every Commission in the Army immediately after it became vacant, so that there could be little or no Savings upon that Account; and if there was any, the Custom had always been to leave it to be disposed of by his Majesty, in such Manner as he thought fit.'

Mr H. Pelham.

Hereupon Mr William Pulteney spoke as follows:

Mr W. Pulteney.

Sir,

'I made this Motion in a manner by meer Accident; but I do not think it is any Argument against it to tell us, that the Savings amount to but a meer Trifle; we shall be best Judges of that, when we see the Accounts laid before us; and let it amount to what it will, if it is saved, (I will not say sunk, being a hard Word) we ought to inquire into the Application of it. I believe there are not a great many Commissions kept long vacant, but I am sure there have been some that have been kept vacant for a considerable Time; we ought at least to have an Account of them; because I observe there is a Demand every Year brought in, which is called, *An Account of Services incurred and not provided for*; I think the most proper Way of answering this Account is, to have *An Account of Services provided for and not performed*. I am persuaded that in the Civil-List Revenue there is not an Office vacant for a Day, but what the Savings thereby are brought to Account, and disposed of in the most frugal Manner; I think the same good Management ought to be observ'd in the Army.'

General Ross said, 'That he supposed the same Method was observed now, that was formerly observed in Flanders: That he knew no Commission was then kept vacant for any Time; as soon as ever the Death of any Officer was certified, a new Commission was granted to some other in his Place, and what little Savings could be made that way were always left to the Disposal of the General, and were apply'd by him in such Manner as he thought most proper for the Publick Service.'

General Ross.

Mr Bootle spoke next.

Sir,

Mr Bootle.

'Whatever is given for the Maintenance of the Army is a Part of the Publick Money, and it is our Business to call for the Accounts, and inquire into the Disposal of every Farthing of such Money. If the Savings by vacant Commissions have hitherto been well and properly apply'd, they who advised such Applications will have the more Honour, and if there have been any Misapplications, this House ought

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to take Care to prevent any such for the Future. In past Times the Savings upon this Account may perhaps amount to but a Trifle; however, it is certain, that considering the great Number of Officers we maintain, a very large Sum may be annually saved; and if we never call for any such Account, Commissions may in Time of Peace be kept vacant for a long Time, on purpose thereby to raise Money, in order to convert it to Uses that may be prejudicial to the Nation.'

Sir R. Walpole.

Then Sir Robert Walpole stood up and said :

Sir,

' During all the Time that the Duke of Marlborough commanded our Armies, there was never any Commission became vacant but was immediately filled up; There was, indeed, generally about a Week allowed for the filling up of any Vacancy, but what was saved that way was generally given to the Colonel of the Regiment, to answer some of the extraordinary Expences he was sometimes put to; or it was given to the Officer that succeeded, to defray the Charges he might be at upon account of his new Commission. The same Custom is still observ'd, and any little Savings that happen between the Death of one Officer, and the putting of another in his room, have always been dispos'd of by his Majesty in the Manner I have mention'd, or have been apply'd to charitable Uses, and given in small Sums, to those of the Army who stood in need of any such. I hope this House does not intend to take the Disposal of such small Charities into their own Hands, contrary to the Custom that has always hitherto been observed; I do not think that this House can be so good a Judge as a Board of General Officers in the Disposal of such Charities; and while it is left to his Majesty, he can always have the Advice of such a Board when any small Sum is to be disposed of in that Way. As to the Civil List, there are no Savings by any Vacancies in that Part of the Revenue; every Place is filled up as soon as it becomes vacant, in the same Manner as it is in the Army, the Management in both is the same, and in both there is as much Frugality as possible.'

Then the Question being put on Mr Pulteney's Motion, it was carried in the Negative.

This Debate being over, Sir Charles Turner reported the Resolutions of the Committee on the Supply, as follows, viz. I. That the Number of effective Men, to be provided for Guards and Garrisons in Great Britain, and for Guernsey and Jersey, for the Year 1732, be, including 1815 Invalids, and 555 Men, which the six Independent Companies consist of for the Service of the Highlands, 17,709 Men, Commission and Non-Commission Officers included. II. That a Sum not exceeding 653,216 l. 10 s, 1 d. be granted to his Majesty,

The Committee
vote 17,709 Men
for the Year 1732;
and 653,216 l. 10 s.
1 d. for the Charge
thereof.

jeſty, for defraying the Charge of the ſaid 17,709 Men.

The firſt of the above Reſolutions was agreed to by the Houſe, without any new Debate, but upon putting the Queſtion as to the ſecond, Mr Walter Plumer ſtood up, and ſpoke as follows :

Mr Speaker,

‘ There was laſt Night ſuch a long Debate upon the firſt of theſe Reſolutions, and ſuch a Diſturbance upon the ſecond, that I could not then have an Opportunity to ſpeak to it. I hope therefore, Sir, that the Houſe will now indulge me with a little Time to give my Sentiments even as to this ſecond Reſolution. Sir, it is highly neceſſary for the Good and Welfare of this Nation, that every Farthing of the Charge which the People are put to ſhould be publicly known, and fully conſidered by this Houſe ; the Nation ought not to be cheated, and made to believe, that the maintaining of this 18,000 Men coſt them only 653,000 l. when in reality it coſts them a great deal more. Beſides the Money that is raiſed among the People, and paid into the Hands of the Government, for maintaining this Army, there is not an Inn-keeper, an Ale-Houſe, or a Brandy-Shop in the Nation, but what pays a very great additional Tax, by Way of Quarters for the Officers and Soldiers.

‘ But there is ſtill, Sir, a much greater Evil ariſes from this hidden way of raiſing Money upon the People. It is, Sir, an arbitrary and an unequal Way of raiſing Money, and conſequently affords to thoſe, who have the Management of the Army, an Opportunity of oppreſſing ſome People, or ſome Parts of the Nation. If any Country, if any Borough in this Kingdom diſobliges thoſe in Power, by ſending Representatives to this Houſe, who do not vote as the Miniſters would have them, it is in the Power of the Government, even without any Pretence for ſo doing, to ſend a great Number of the Regular Forces to be quartered upon that County or that Borough ; by which Means a much greater Sum is raiſed upon the People of that County or Borough, than is proportionally raiſed in any other Part of the Nation ; nay, even if any private Inn-keeper, or Ale-Houſe Man in any County or Borough ſhall give a wrong Vote at the Election of Members of Parliament, it is in the Power of the Government, by means of the Juſtices and the Conſtables who are named by them, to oppreſs that Man, by quartering more Soldiers upon him, than are in Proportion quartered upon any one of his Neighbours. Theſe are Grievances which the Nation juſtly complain of, and ought to conſider how they are to be redreſſed.

To this Sir William Strickland reply'd,

Sir,

‘ The honourable Gentleman, who ſpoke laſt, ſeems, by

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The Reſolutions of the Committee relating to the Land-Forces being reported, the firſt Reſolution is agreed to.

Debate on the ſecond Reſolution.

Sir Walt. Plumer.

Sir W. Strickland.

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what he has said, to bring a Charge against me, or at least against those, who have been in the Office which I have the Honour to be in at present. For my own part, Sir, I can safely declare, that ever since I came into that Office, there has been no Favour shewn to any one Part of the Country, nor to any one Man in the Nation; we have never so much as thought of having a Regard to any thing, but to that of cantoning and quartering the Troops into such Places, as were most easy for the Country and most convenient for them; unless when the Safety and Security of the Nation in general required the marching of a Number of them into any particular Country. This, Sir, has been the Method ever since I came into the Office: It shall be the Method as long as I continue in it; and I firmly believe, that the same Method was always observed by my Predecessors in Office.'

Mr E. Waller.

Hereupon Mr Edmund Waller said,

Sir,

'I do not know what Method has been observ'd in cantoning and quartering the Troops, but I know that the Country complains heavily of the Oppressions they lie under upon that Account; it is but a little Time ago since some of my own Tenants came and told me, that they should be ruined by the Dragoons that were quarter'd upon them; they had not, they said, a Lock of Hay but what they were obliged to give to the Soldiers; so that all their own Cattle were in danger of being starved. For, Sir, in all Countries where the Soldiers come, they and their Horses must be first serv'd, and with the best of every Thing too; and what is still worse, the poor People are often obliged to serve them at their own Prices.'

Mr H. Pelham.

Mr Henry Pelham answer'd Mr Waller,

Sir,

'As I had the Honour to serve for some Time in that Office, and particularly at the Time mention'd by the honourable Gentleman who spoke last, I think it necessary to say something upon the present Occasion. I remember very well, that Gentleman did make some Complaints to me; but I remember likewise, and he must also remember it, that I told him that the Review, which was at that Time, was the Occasion of bringing so many of the Forces into that Country; and as soon as that was over they were sent elsewhere, and that Gentleman's Tenants, in particular, were relieved from any Hardship they might think they lay under upon that Account. During the whole time that I was in that Office, there was never any such Complaint made to me, but that I immediately order'd Relief to the Persons who thought themselves aggrieved, or gave them such Reasons why I could not give them Relief, as they seem'd to be satisfied with.

with. In such Cases I never had any Respect of Persons ; so far otherwise, that I have often given Relief at the Desire of those with whom I never did vote in this House, nor I believe ever shall ; and have order'd those very Troops to be sent and quarter'd upon those, with whom I have always agreed in Opinion.' Anno 5. Geo. II.
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Then Mr Plumer spoke again as follows :

Mr Plumer.

Sir,

' I am sorry that what I propos'd only for the Relief of the Publick, should be turned into a personal Dispute, or that Gentlemen should begin to vindicate themselves before they are accused. I did not say, that the honourable Gentleman now in the Office, or that any Gentleman that has been in that Office, us'd any unjustifiable Methods in that respect, to favour one Party in the Nation more than another ; all that I said, and I say so still, was, that such Methods may be practis'd, such Means may be us'd for oppressing those who happen to differ in Opinion from the chief Men in Power ; and such Means being of dangerous Consequence to our Constitution, they ought to be guarded against and prevented if possible. The Army, Sir, is supported, I hope, and maintained for the Service of all, and therefore all the Subjects of the Nation ought to contribute equally to the Expence of maintaining it. There is not a Soldier quarter'd upon an Inn-keeper in Town or Country, but what costs that Inn-keeper near as much as he costs the Government ; so that if we were to raise all the Money by Parliamentary Authority, that is necessary for maintaining the great Army we have, I am afraid we must raise near double the Sum that is propos'd.'

Mr William Pulteney spoke next,

Mr W. Pulteney.

Sir,

' I was afraid at the Beginning of this Debate, that Barracks were to have been propos'd ; I am glad to find it is not so. I am indeed as much as any Person for giving Relief to that Part of our poor oppress'd Subjects, the Inn-keepers and Victuallers ; for since I find that an Army is like to be a Part of our Constitution, I think it very just and reasonable, that the Expence of maintaining them should be laid as equally as possible upon the whole People of the Nation. But, Sir, I must observe, that the same Money that we raise for maintaining 18,000 Men, would maintain 60,000 Men of Regular Forces in France, Germany, or any other Country in Europe, according to their Way of regulating their Armies. I know, Sir, from whence our great Expence proceeds : It is from the great Number of Officers maintained in our Army ; we have so many Regiments, and so few private Men in each Regiment, that really a great Part

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of our Army are Commission or Non-Commission Officers, which makes our Army so expensive to us, and at the same Time makes it more dangerous to our Constitution. I have been assured that 100,000 l. English Money *per Annum* will maintain 10,000 Men of the Armies of France or Germany, or any other Troops but our own : And I have been told, I do not say that I remember, or that I can depend upon my Author, that the 12,000 Hessians, which we have so long maintain'd, were maintain'd for less than that Sum yearly.'

Sir R. Walpole.

To this Sir Robert Walpole replied :

Sir,

' I wish the Gentleman, who spoke last, would give us his Author for the Fact mentioned ; let him be who he will, I know the Story to be false : But it is the common Way of scandalizing the Government, to invent and spread false Reports thro' the Country. The Stipulation for the 12,000 Hessians was made, Sir, upon the same Footing that all such Stipulations were made during the last War ; there was not a Penny less stipulated to be paid for them, than what was agreed to by the House, and the whole Money was yearly advanced them, according to the Accounts that have been laid before the House.

General Wade.

Then General Wade spoke as follows :

Sir,

' Those who are acquainted with the Method of maintaining a German Army, will not envy them the Happiness of maintaining their Troops at so cheap a Rate as they do. It is well known, that what they come short of ours in Pay, they do more than make up by plundering, oppressing, and raising Contributions upon the Countries where they are quartered. When I was in Italy, Sir, I had the Honour to be invited to dine with one of the German Generals, who commanded in that Country : When I came to the Palace where he had his Quarters, I found the Hall and the Avenues leading thereto full of Country People, some with Wine, some with Beer, some with Bread, some with Fowls, some with Pigs, and God knows how many other Things ; I could not imagine what all this meant ; but when we came to sit down at Table, I found such Variety of Dishes, such Variety of Wines, so magnificent Attendance, and so sumptuous an Entertainment every manner of way, which at the same Time I was told to be the General's ordinary Way of living, that I was very much surpriz'd ; and after Dinner, over a Glass of Wine, I took the Liberty to ask the General, *For God's Sake, Sir, how are you able to live after this Rate ? for it would break any of our English Generals to live in so splendid a Manner ; our Pay could not support it.* Pay, Sir, says he, *Why, I have none upon this Account from the Government ;*

overnment; all this comes from the Country where I am quartered, which they are obliged to furnish me with for nothing; I have, Sir, seven Miles of the Country round allotted to me for supporting my Table. Then, Sir, I guess'd at the Meaning of all those Country People's being in and about the Hall; I found they were all come with their Peace-Offerings to the General: At this Rate, Sir, a German Officer does not stand in need of much Pay from the Government; but I hope the Kingdom of England will never be served at such a Rate.'

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Sir William Wyndham spoke next,

Sir W. Wyndham;

Sir,

'I do not know what may be the Methods by which the Germans or French maintain their Armies; but let their Manner be what it will, I am sure that the Expence we are now at for maintaining our Army is much greater than necessary; nay, Sir, much greater than was usual, even among ourselves for maintaining an equal Number of Men. I know that during the last War 18,000 of our Troops were maintained abroad for 400,000 l. *per Annum*, and both the Officers and Soldiers had the same Pay they have now; it is true, it may be said, that this Body of Men did not cost so much, because there were no Guards among them; but I know, Sir, that 12,000 Men, Guards and Garrisons included, were maintained at home for between 3 and 400,000 l. *per Annum*; out of which Sum were paid, the General's Money, Waggon-Money, Contingencies, and all other *Items* whatever, any way appertaining to the Army. Considering the State this Nation is in at present, and the heavy Debts it is loaded with, I think no proper Method for saving the Publick Money ought to be neglected; if we must maintain an Army, let us maintain it at as cheap a Rate as possible. Even 100,000 l. *per Annum* would make no small Figure, if added yearly to the Sinking Fund: I hope, therefore, this Affair will be thought on, and taken into Consideration when we meet next Year.'

After this the Question was put, and the above Resolution was agreed to.

Jan. 28. Mr Winnington presented to the House a Bill, *For the better securing and encouraging the Trade of his Majesty's Sugar-Colonies in America*, which was receiv'd and read the first Time, and order'd to be read a second Time.

Hereupon Mr Perry, Member for London, said, 'That this Bill was of such a Nature, that all our Colonies in America are some way or another concerned therein; That it was of the utmost Consequence to the Trade and Navigation of this Kingdom, and therefore ought to be maturely considered, not only within Doors, but likewise by all those without

Doors

The second Resolution of the Committee agreed to.

A Bill brought in for securing the Trade of the Sugar-Colonies in America;

Which, upon Mr Perry's Motion, is order'd to be printed.

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Debate thereon.

Mr Winnington
moves, that the
Representations,
sent over from the
Colonies to the
Board of Trade,
may be laid before
the House.

Col. Bladen.

Mr Perry.

Mr Sandys.

Doors who understand any thing of Trade, and have a
Regard for the Prosperity and Welfare of their native Coun-
try ; and that all such might have an Opportunity of giving
their Sentiments upon this Occasion, he moved, ' That the Bill
might be printed.' This Motion being seconded and agreed to by
the House, the Bill was accordingly ordered to be printed.

Mr Winnington spoke next,

Sir,

' As this Bill is of very great Consequence to the Trade
of this Nation in general, and to the Well-being of our Set-
tlements, either upon the Continent or in the Islands of Ame-
rica, we ought to consider the particular Trade and Produce
of every one of our Settlements ; and therefore, that we
may have as much Insight into this Matter as possible, I
move, ' That the Representations sent over from our several
Colonies, and laid before the honourable the Commissioners
of Trade and Plantations, may be laid before this House,
before we go upon the second Reading of the Bill.'

Mr Winnington was supported by Col. Bladen, who spoke
as follows :

Sir,

' There have been several Representations sent over to his
Majesty from our Settlements in the West-Indies, which Re-
presentations have been referred to the Board of Trade to be
considered by them, and for them to report their Opinion
upon the Matter therein contained to his Majesty : Some of
them we have already considered, and have given our Opi-
nion upon them ; but there are others that we have not as
yet had Time so thoroughly to consider as to be able to give
any Opinion upon them ; however, Sir, in these last we shall
make all imaginable Dispatch, and shall be ready to lay
them before the House as soon as possible.'

Then Mr Perry spoke again,

Sir,

' As this is an Affair of so great Consequence, we ought
not to be in any Hurry about passing the Bill ; we must
wait till we have all those Materials, which are necessary for
giving us a full Information in the Affair before us. There
is particularly in the Bill, as now brought in, a Clause about
Lumber, which in my Opinion will do more Harm to the
Trade of most of our Colonies, and consequently to the Trade
of this Nation, than all the other Clauses can do Good ;
but I shall have another Opportunity, I hope, of giving my
Sentiments fully upon this Head, and therefore I shall not
trouble the House with them at this Time.'

After him Mr Sandys said,

Sir,

' This Bill was last Session of Parliament a long Time
before

before this House: there is no Clause in the Bill now brought in, but what was in the former, and every one of them was then fully considered and particularly examined into. The Committee, that was appointed last Session of Parliament for drawing up the Bill, were no less than three Months about it; in which Time they certainly had under their Consideration every thing, that could possibly be thought of for giving them any Light into the Affair. I believe there is no Gentleman in this House, but what is persuaded that some Measures ought to be taken, and speedily taken too, for giving an Encouragement to our Sugar-Colonies, so as to enable them to carry on a Trade, at least, upon an equal Footing with their Rivals in the Sugar-Trade. The only Reason of the Bill's not passing, which was brought in last Session of Parliament, was that they had not had Time in the other House to consider the Affair so fully as they thought was necessary; I have been informed, that some of the Members of the other House even complained, that it was hard that we did not allow them three Weeks to consider of an Affair, that we had been above three Months in examining into. As the Bill now before us contains nothing but what was in the former Bill, which was so fully consider'd as to pass through this House, I am therefore of Opinion, that there is no Occasion to make any Delay in the passing of this Bill, or to wait for any farther Information in the Affair; for I am persuaded we can receive none, but what has been already laid before this House, and fully consider'd in the Passing of the former Bill.'

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Mr Oglethorpe spoke next.

Mr Oglethorpe,

Sir,

' In all Cases that come before this House, where there seems to be a Clashing of Interests between one Part of the Country and another, or between one Set of People and another, we ought to have no Regard to the particular Interest of any Country or Set of People; the Good of the whole is what we ought only to have under our Consideration: Our Colonies are all a Part of our own Dominions; the People in every one of them are our own People, and we ought to shew an equal Respect to all.

' I remember, Sir, That there was once a Petition presented to this House by one County, complaining, that they were very much injur'd in their Trade, as to the Sale of Beans, by another; and therefore they modestly pray'd, that the other County should be prohibited to sell any Beans.

' Such things may happen, I hope it is not so at present, but in the Case, before us, if it should appear, that all our Plantations, upon the Continent of America, are against that which is desir'd by the Sugar-Colonies, we are to presume,

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at least, that the granting thereof will be a Prejudice to the Trade or particular Interests of our Continent-Settlements; and surely, Sir, the Danger of hurting so considerable a Part of our Dominions, a Part so extensive as to reach from the 34th to the 46th Degree of Northern Latitude, will at least make us incline to be extremely cautious in what we are going about.

‘ I shall be as ready as any Man, to give all possible Relief and Encouragement to our Sugar Colonies; but if the Relief or Encouragement asked for appear to be an Injury to the whole, or if it appears that it will do more Harm to the other Parts of our Dominions than it can do Good to them, we must refuse it; we must think of some other Methods for putting them upon an equal Footing with those, who are their Rivals in any particular Branch of Trade.

‘ We may form some Judgment, Sir, from the Appearances that were before us last Session of Parliament: but we may form a much more distinct Judgment of Things from what may be brought before us now. Some of those, concerned here for our Settlements upon the Continent, seem’d last Year to be indifferent; they seem’d in some Manner to give the Affair up, I believe without any good Authority from their Constituents; but now the Colonies themselves have had an Opportunity to consider the Affair then before us, and to send over their Thoughts upon the Subject in a proper and authentick Manner; their true and real Sentiments will best appear from the Representations they have sent over; and till these are laid before us, we cannot give our Opinions, either as to their Inclinations, or as to the Weight of the Objections that they may make.

‘ I must say, Sir, to the Honour of the Gentlemen concerned in the Board of Trade, that they are as exact and as diligent in all the Matters which fall under their Province as any Board in England; they have much more Business than most others, and their Business will be daily increasing, in Proportion as our Colonies increase in Riches and in Power. It is already one of the most useful Boards we have, and as long as the same good Conduct is pursued, it will always be of great Benefit and Advantage to the Trade of the British Dominions.’

After this Debate, it was resolv’d, That an humble Address should be presented to his Majesty, that he would be graciously pleas’d to give Directions to the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, to lay before the House, Copies of all Representations and Papers, which had been laid before them, since the last Session of Parliament, relating to the Dispute between his Majesty’s Sugar-Colonies and Northern Colonies in America.

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Then Mr Wyndham, Member for Dunwich, moved, That a Committee be appointed to inspect and settle the Fees to be taken by all the Officers and Servants of their House, and to examine what Salaries or Allowances they had from the Government, and to report the same, with their Opinion thereupon, to the House.

Hereupon Sir William Yonge spoke as follows :

Sir,

‘ Considering how much Business of great Consequence now lies, or may probably come before this House during the Course of this Session of Parliament, I do not think that we ought to take up the Time of the House with any Matters of such a trifling Nature. If any Complaint had been made to us of any Exactions or exorbitant Fees taken by any of our Officers or Servants, it would have been our Duty to have inquired into it, and to have given all proper Redress ; but as there has been no such Complaint made, at least I have heard of none, I can see no Reason why we ought to enter at present into such an Inquiry.

To this Mr Wyndham reply’d :

Sir,

‘ I made this Motion, not expecting indeed that it would have been opposed by any Gentleman in the House, and therefore I did not think it was necessary for me to give any Reasons for making the Motion ; but now that I am called upon, I must say, I believe, Sir, it is well known, that there are very great Complaints without Doors of the extravagant Charges and Expences, that People are obliged to be at in passing private Bills, or in carrying any other Business through either House of Parliament ; I do not know where the Fault lies, perhaps it may be in the other House, but let them look to themselves, we ought at least to take Care that there be no Ground for any such Complaint in our House. We are not to wait till a regular Complaint be made ; few will venture to complain in Form, because no Man knows how soon he may be obliged to come back again ; and when any Exactions are made, they are singly consider’d so inconsiderable, that no Man thinks it worth his while to complain ; but many Trifles amount to a Sum, and such Things generally grow worse and worse when not look’d after and inquired into : If there be any Evil, what I have propos’d will be an effectual Remedy ; I shall be sorry if my Motion is not agreed to ; but I will at least have the Pleasure of having made it, and thereby done what was in my Power for preventing any Evil that may ensue.’

Upon this Mr Speaker stood up, and spoke as follows,

Gentlemen,

‘ Since my Time, I know of no Exactions nor any exor-

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Mr Wyndham moves for appointing a Committee to inspect and settle the Fees of the House.

Debate thereon.

Sir W. Yonge.

Mr Wyndham.

Mr Speaker

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bitant Fees that have been taken ; I have been as careful as possible in this Point, and have always made as close Inquiries as I could. I remember some Time ago, I found that a Guinea was usually given to my Secretary, upon the giving out the Warrant for Writs, whereas the old Fee was but ten Shillings ; I thereupon ordered expressly, that he should not receive any more upon such Occasion than the old Fee of ten Shillings ; and to prevent all Pretence of giving or taking what is commonly called Expedition-Money, I ordered, that even this Fee should not be charged or paid till after the Election was made, and the Oaths taken upon the Return of the Writs. I likewise have observed, that the Clerk of Committees usually got a Guinea, in place of the old Fee of 13 s. and 4 d. This I also have endeavoured to rectify, though it must be granted that in most Cases, even a Guinea is a Reward small enough for his Trouble and Attendance upon such Occasions. But I believe that this Motion was made, not so much on account of any Abuses that have been lately committed, as to prevent any such in Time to come, which ought to be every Gentleman's Care, and shall be mine, in particular, as long as I have the Honour to be in the Place where I am.

Mr Sandys.

Mr Sandys spoke next :

Sir,

‘ I am persuaded, that it has always been your particular Care, that no Impositions should be made upon any of the Subjects, who have happened to have any Business before this House ; and I believe no Gentleman thinks that we have any Occasion for such a Committee, as hath been proposed, on account of any late Exactions or exorbitant Fees ; but now that an Inquiry into the Fees taken by our own Servants has been proposed, I am afraid it may be some Imputation upon us, not to agree to the Motion. Considering how many Years ago it is, since the Fees to be taken by the Servants of this House have been settled, I do not doubt but that some of them may now be found to be too small ; and if this Affair be referred to a Committee, I think they ought to increase those which they judge to be too small, as well as to diminish those which they may think extravagant.

Mr W. Plumer.

After him Mr Walter Plumer said,

Sir,

‘ I look upon this Motion to be a very proper one at present, and I hope the House will agree to it ; because I think, Sir, we ought to search whether or no there be a Beam in our own Eye in order to pull it out, before we begin to pull out the Mote that is in another's. I presume the honourable Gentleman, who made this Motion, made it only as a Prelude to something of more Consequence ; I hope, after

we

we have examined into, and settled the Fees to be taken by our own Clerks and Servants, we shall next proceed to examine into, and settle the Fees to be taken by the Officers, Clerks and Servants of all our Courts of Law. As to the Fees of this House, I do not know what may be the Case, but I am sure that the other is a very great Grievance, and loudly complained of by the whole Nation. We have had printed Lists of all those Fees laid before us : As yet we have gone no farther but only to receive them ; but those who brought them in have gone a little farther ; they think they may now, by Authority of Parliament, exact all the Fees, at least, that are mentioned in those Lists, and from thence they have taken Occasion, even to encrease several of their Fees much beyond what they had formerly any Authority for ; so that unless we proceed farther, and make some proper Regulations as to all those Lists of Fees that have been laid before us, we have by calling for them, done rather an Injury than a Service to our Country. I shall therefore be for agreeing to the Motion now made, on purpose that we may, with Decency, proceed to the inquiring into and settling the Fees, that are to be taken in all the Courts of Law, and other Offices in the Nation.

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Mr Winnington.

Then Mr Winnington stood up, and said,
Sir,
' According to the Order of this House, a List of the Fees, usually taken by every Clerk and Servant belonging thereto, has been brought in, and has been, I believe, perused by most Members of the House. I do not hear that any Objection is made to any of them, or that it is pretended that more has been at any Time taken ; I therefore do not see what Use there is for a Committee in this Affair ; I believe if we order them to be printed, and Copies to be fix'd up in the publick Offices belonging to the House, it will be sufficient for preventing any exorbitant Demands in Time to come, and will be as effectual as any thing that can be done by a Committee. I suppose the Gentlemen have some farther Design in this Matter ; but if they have, I think they may proceed upon it, without giving the House any needless Trouble as to the Committee now moved for.

Mr W. Pulteney.

To this Mr Pulteney answer'd,
Sir,
' I was not at all in the Secret as to this Motion ; I did not know any Thing of what farther Design there may be, so that I am sure I cannot in this Affair be any way a Blabber. I agree with the honourable Gentleman who spoke last, as to the ordering the List of Fees to be printed ; let them be printed and published, and if my worthy Friend

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pleases, let them be printed in the *Free Briton* * too: But I cannot think, Sir, that we ought to rest satisfied with the List delivered, without inquiring any farther about the Matter; because a List of Fees has been delivered in, we are not surely from thence to conclude, that no greater Fee has ever been taken than what is mentioned in that List: Exactions are always made in a private clandestine Manner; such Secrets may be discovered by a Committee, but we are not to expect that ever the Authors of such will, in a publick Manner, come voluntarily and give the House an Information of the Crimes they have been guilty of. It is well known how terrible Parliamentary Inquiries are to those who have been guilty of any Iniquity; and though by the Inquiry now moved for, no Iniquity shall be discovered, yet the Terror of it will remain, and will be a Bar to Extortion for a long Time to come.'

Then the Question being put, it was carried in the Affirmative, and a Committee was appointed accordingly.

A Petition of Sir
Tho. Lombe relating to his Silk-Engine.

The same Day a Petition was presented by Sir Thomas Lombe, alledging, 'That he had, at his own Expence, and with the utmost Difficulty and Hazard, discovered and introduced into this Kingdom the Art of making fine Italian Organzine or Thrown-Silk out of fine Raw-Silk, by large Engines of a most curious and intricate Structure, which Commodity was absolutely necessary to carry on our Silk-Weaving Trade, and was formerly bought with our Money, ready work'd in Italy: That his late Majesty had granted him a Patent for the sole making and using the said Engines for the Term of 14 Years; but that several Years of the said Term was expired before he could finish the said Engine, and by reason of other Difficulties, the whole Term was almost expired before he could bring the Manufacture to Perfection; and therefore praying that the House would take his Case into Consideration, and grant him a farther Term of Years for the sole making and using the said Engines, or such other Recompence or Relief, as to the House shall seem meet.'

Mr Perry's Motion for referring the Bill to a Committee.

Debate thereon.

Mr: Oglethorp.

Upon this Mr Perry stood up and said, 'That he knew that the Petitioner had been at a very great Trouble and Expence about the setting up of that Engine; and that a great Part of the Term granted by the Patent had passed, before any Advantage could be made of that most useful Invention, and therefore he moved, That the Petition should be referred to the Consideration of a Committee.' Mr Oglethorp added, 'That since the Petitioner had, at his own Expence and Hazard, introduced a most useful and necessary Manufacture into

* A News-Paper then printed in Defence of the Ministry.

into this Kingdom, he certainly ought to meet with all proper Encouragement : That one Engine was now set up and finished in the Town of Derby, by which that whole County was improved, and many of their Poor employed, who probably would have otherways been a Burden upon their respective Parishes : Therefore he seconded the Motion for referring the Petition to a Committee.' Hereupon Sir Thomas Alton said, ' That Patents had always been look'd upon as prejudicial to the Trade and Manufactures of this Kingdom, more especially when continued for any long Term of Years ; for which Reason their Ancestors had been so wise, as to make a Law against the granting of any Patent for a longer Term than 14 Years ; and it would be a dangerous Precedent for them to prolong the Term, or to grant a new Term to any Patentee : That the Petitioner had enjoyed the Benefit of his Patent several Years, had carried on a vast Trade under the same, and had thereby acquired a great deal of Riches, which he thought was a sufficient Recompence for the Charge or Hazard he had been at : That the prolonging of the Term would not only be to prevent the Nation's making any Benefit of that Invention, but also to give the Petitioner a farther Opportunity of disturbing all other Inventions, Works or Engines, any way resembling his, which would be a great Discouragement to all new Improvements or Manufactures, and consequently of dangerous Consequence to the Trade of this Nation ; therefore he could not but be against even referring the Petition to the Consideration of a Committee.' Sir John Rushout said, ' That as no Man was intitled to a Patent, but he who introduced some new Invention or Manufacture into the Kingdom, he did not know, whether the Petitioner had at first any Title to a Patent ; for that to his Knowledge there had been, in the Parish where he lived, some such Manufacture for upwards of thirty Years. However, supposing that the Petitioner had at first a good Title to a Patent, yet he could not think that there was any Reason for renewing the Term ; but as all these things would properly come under the Cognizance of the Committee, therefore he would not be against referring the Petition to the Consideration of a Committee.'

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Sir Tho. Alton.

Sir John Rushout.

Hereupon Mr Perry stood up again, and spoke as follows :

Mr Perry.

Sir,

' The Petitioner, Sir Thomas Lombe, happening to have a Brother whose Head is extremely well turned for the Mechanicks, and both of them being well informed of the great Charge, that this Nation was yearly put to in the Purchase of that Sort of Italian Thrown-Silk call'd Organzine, and that the same was all made within the Dominions of Savoy, by the Means of a large and curious Engine which had been set

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up and kept at work for many Years in that Country, but had been kept so secret, that no other Nation could ever yet come at the Invention; they resolved to make an Attempt for the bringing of this Invention into their own Country. They knew that there would be great Difficulty and Danger in this Undertaking, because the King of Sardinia had made it Death for any Man to discover this Invention, or attempt to carry it out of his Dominions; however, the Petitioner's Brother resolved to venture his Person for the Benefit and Advantage of his Native Country, and Sir Thomas was resolved to venture his Money, and to furnish his Brother with whatever Sums should be necessary for executing so bold and so generous a Design. His Brother went accordingly over to Italy, and after a long Stay, and a great Expence in that Country, he found Means to see this Engine so often, and to pry into the Nature of it so narrowly, that he made himself Master of the whole Invention, and of all the different Parts and Motions belonging thereto. After his Return to England, Sir Thomas, who knew the Excellency of his Brother's Genius, and could depend upon his Word, was convinced that he was fully Master of the Thing, and therefore he chearfully agreed to supply whatever Expence should be necessary for setting it up in England; but that he might have the same Advantage, that other Persons have and are intitled unto upon such Occasions, he applied and got a Grant of a Patent from his late Majesty in the Year 1718. This Engine is so large, and there are so many Wheels, Motions, Spindles, and other things belonging to it, that it was three Years after he had obtained his Patent, before he could possibly finish the Engine. After the finishing thereof, he could make no Benefit thereby, till he had procured and instructed a sufficient Number of Persons how to work the same; and before he could do this, his Sardinian Majesty had got an Account that the Engine was set up in England, and he was so sensible of the Disadvantage it would be to his Country, to have that Sort of Thrown-Silk made in any other Part of the World, that he immediately prohibited the Exportation of Raw-Silk out of his Country; and before Sir Thomas could fall upon any way of getting a sufficient Quantity of Raw-Silk stole out of that Country, so as to make any Advantage of his Engine, the Term of his Patent was within a very few Years of being expired, from which we may conclude that it is impossible, that he could as yet have got a sufficient Recompence for the Hazard and Expence that he has been at. There might have been before, there may be still, some other Sorts of Twist-Silk made in England; but there never was any such as Organzine made, nor was there ever any such Engine in England, as this that has

has been brought in and set up by the Petitioner and his Brother. Those who are expert in the Silk-Manufactures know well the Difference between the Organzine and any other Sort of Twisted-Silk, but Gentlemen who have not narrowly examined into the Affair may be mistaken ; but as to the Engine, the Difference between it and any other may be easily discovered : It is a very large Engine, which is first moved by Water, by the Means of which first Motion a great many Wheels and Spindles are set a moving, and thereby great Quantities of Silk are twitted in a much finer Manner, and by much fewer Hands, than can possibly be done by any Engine that was ever yet invented.

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Mr Barnard spoke next :

Mr Barnard.

Sir,

‘ The chief Reason why the Petitioner has never yet been able to make any great Advantage of his Invention is, that no Raw-Silk is proper for his Purpose but the Italian, so that he could have but very little, except what was privately stole out of the Dominions of Savoy. He has been at the Expence of making several Experiments of the Turkey Raw-Silk, but has always found that it is impossible to make good Organzine of that Sort of Silk. He has likewise tried the Raw-Silk brought from China, and he finds that it would do as well as the Italian, but then the Company keeps it at so high a Price, that it will not answer ; what may be the Reason of the Company’s keeping that Silk so dear, I know not ; I can find no other Reason for it, but only the great Profits that Company are resolved to make of every thing, which they have an exclusive Privilege for dealing in. I am sure they purchase it in the Country at a very cheap Rate, and the Danger or Expence of bringing it Home cannot be so great, but that they may sell it at a more reasonable Price. The Petitioner has likewise made some Experiments of the Raw-Silk that has been produced from Carolina, which has answer’d extremely well ; and if there were enough of it, we should not perhaps be obliged to lay out so much of the Nation’s Money on the Purchase of Italian Raw-Silk, nor should we have Occasion to trouble ourselves much about the prohibiting of the Exportation of their Raw-Silk ; but as yet there is but very little Silk produced from Carolina, so that the Petitioner could not make any Advantage thereby. I do not know what this House may judge to be a proper Recompence to the Petitioner, for the Hazard and Expence he has been at ; but whatever Resolutions may be made in this Affair, all possible Care ought to be taken for preventing the Invention’s being carried out of this Country. If we can keep our Neighbours from stealing it from us, it will be a great Encouragement to several Branches of our

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Silk-Manufacture Trade ; we shall have the Benefit at least of supplying most of them with that Sort of Thrown-Silk called Organzine.'

Mr Oglethorp.

Then Mr Oglethorp stood up again, and said,
Sir,

' The Act for confining the King's Patents to the Term of 14 Years, was made in the Reign of King James I. The Bubbles and Monopolies which were erected, and the many Enormities which were committed about that Time and for some Years before, had become a publick Grievance, and was loudly exclaimed at ; and the Reason for making that Law, was to prevent the setting up of any such Bubbles or Monopolies for the future. The Petitioner has never so much as endeavoured to make a Bubble of his Affair, nor has he ever grasped at the setting up of any unlawful Monopoly. He pretends to nothing else but what every Author of a new Invention is reasonably intitled unto, that is, to have the sole Use of his own Invention for so long a Time, as may be a just Recompence to him for the Hazard and Expence he has been at, in bringing his Invention to Perfection. If he can shew to this House, that he has not yet had such a Recompence as is sufficient, we are not confined by the former Law ; we not only may, but we ought, to bring in a Bill for prolonging the Term of his Patent, or we ought to grant him such other Recompence as may be deemed proper and reasonable. Raw-Silk may be bought even in this Country for 16s. *per* Pound, but when that very Raw-Silk is manufactured and made Organzine, it sells for 24 s. *per* Pound ; the Difference, which is fifty *per Cent.* is all clear Money got to the Nation ; the 8s. *per* Pound, which is added to the Price of that Commodity, is all clear Gain to us, because it is added by the Labour and Industry of our own People ; and since this Gain can be made only by the Means of this Engine, we must grant that this Gentleman has, at his own Hazard and Charge, brought home a very useful and profitable Branch of Trade to his own Country, for which he certainly deserves a Recompence. If he can shew that he has not as yet a Recompence by means of the Patent granted to him, either because of the Difficulty of bringing his Invention to Perfection, or because of inevitable Accidents that have occurred, his Case ought to be considered ; and the only proper Way to inquire into this Matter, is to refer his Petition to the Consideration of a Committee.

Mr J. Drummond.

Then Mr John Drummond, Member for Perth, said,
Sir,

' I shall only take Notice that since the Time that this Gentleman's Invention was brought to Perfection, our Exports

ports of Gold and Silver Lace have increased to a great Degree; the Reason of which is, that the Sort of Twist or 'Thrown-Silk, that is made by the means of his Engine, is the only proper Silk that can be made use of in the Manufacture of Gold and Silver Lace; and we having now that Sort of Silk in much greater Plenty, and much cheaper than we ever had it before, our Manufacturers in such Laces have been able to sell those Manufactures much cheaper than they were ever sold before in this Country, from whence has proceeded the great Increase of our Exports of that Commodity; and when there are such Quantities exported, we may depend upon it that there is very little, if any, imported, notwithstanding that there is perhaps more of it now wore in this Country than ever was before. This I take Notice of, Sir, because I look upon it as an Improvement in our Manufactures, that is entirely owing to this Gentleman's Invention.'

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Then the above Petition was referred to the Consideration of a Committee: A Bill passed afterwards, in this Session, for allowing Sir Thomas Lombe 14,000 £. as an Encouragement for his useful Invention, but without Renewing his Patent.

14,000 £. granted
to Sir Tho. Lombe
for Encouragement
of his Invention of
a Silk-Engine.

The House having resolv'd itself into a Grand Committee, to consider farther of the Supply, a Motion was made, That 25,348 £. 2 s. be granted to his Majesty, upon Account for Out-Pensioners of Chelsea-Hospital for the Year 1732; which being seconded, Mr Pulteney spoke on that Occasion as follows:

Motion for granting
25,348 £. 2 s. for Out-
Pensioners of Chel-
sea-Hospital.

Debate thereon.

Mr W. Pulteney.

Sir,

'I do not now rise up to make any Motion; but I think I am, in Duty to my Country, in Duty to those who do me the Honour to give me a Place in this House, bound to take Notice of some Accounts or Estimates which have been laid before us, and which to me seem to be somewhat extraordinary. I must in general observe, that the Estimates of the Publick Expence increase every Year: From Year to Year there is always some new Article to be provided for, or some Addition made to the old. If we at any Time get free of an extraordinary Charge, it always leaves some Marks behind it; there is always some Part of it remains, and is continued to be a Burden upon the People: These small Remains may be by some thought too inconsiderable to be taken Notice of, but to me nothing seems to be inconsiderable that is a Charge upon the People; these small Remains and these annual Additions, by thus yearly increasing, may come at last to be a Burden too heavy to be borne.

V O L. II.

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‘ I cannot now omit taking Notice of the Article of Chelsea College ; by the Estimate now laid before us, that Article appears to be heavier than it was last Year. During the last War this Nation maintained near 200,000 Men, of which near 90,000 were National Troops, yet towards the End of that War, the Pensioners of Chelsea College did not amount to above 2000, whereas if we include the Regiment of Invalids, and the several Independent Companies of Invalids, they now amount to above 4000 Men. I do not doubt but the Commissioners do whatever they can to examine, and to admit none but those, who by the Rules of that Hospital appear to be intitled to be taken in. I likewise know how many Solicitations they must daily meet with, and how hard it is in most Cases to refuse them ; yet for the Sake of their Country they ought to be extremely cautious in this Respect ; there may be many who are by the Rules intitled to be taken in, and yet are not proper Objects of Charity and Compassion either publick or private. I know, Sir, that there is a Spirit, among the Officers of the Army, for having all their Regiments look well to the Eye ; there is a sort of Emulation among them, who shall have the most young and the best look'd Fellows in their Regiment : This is the Cause that many a brave old Soldier is discharged, in order to make room for a spruce young Fellow, who can powder his Hair and dress so as to make a good Appearance upon a Day of Review, though the old Man be perhaps the better Soldier of the two, and not only willing but able to serve his Country for many Years ; yet he is discharged as unfit for Service, and brought in as a Pensioner upon Chelsea-College : They are admitted into the College as Men old and infirm, yet when once they are got in, they seem to be immortal ; their Numbers never decrease ; surely there are many of those immortal old Men who live so long as idle Pensioners of Chelsea College, that might have served for a great Part of that Time as good Soldiers even in a marching Regiment, more especially in Time of Peace, when there is not the least Occasion for their being obliged to undergo any great Fatigues ; their Duty cannot be extraordinary, and their Marches may be made as easy as they please. I remember that at the last Scrutiny which was made into the Affairs of that Hospital, in which a Right Honourable Person had a principal Concern, above one half of the Persons, whose Names were entered as Pensioners, could not possibly be found ; and of those who were entered as Letter-Men, there were above 100, which was at least one half, discharged ; I do not indeed know why there should be any entered in that Character, I do not see that there is any Necessity for it.

‘ We have heard, Sir, a great deal of the fine Roads lately made through the Highlands of Scotland, and I do not doubt of their being such as they have been represented ; nor do I doubt but that the Gentleman, who had the Oversight and Direction of them, has taken Care to execute the Design as faithfully and as frugally as was possible ; but I cannot see what it was that made such a Design so absolutely necessary : These Highlanders, it is true, were made appear terrible before they were known, but after we got a little more into their Acquaintance, they appeared to be but Men ; and after they were disarmed, I cannot see that there was any great Occasion for this extraordinary Expence, for which I find there is now charged about the Sum of 10,000 l. but since we have been at this extraordinary and unnecessary Expence, and that the Highlands are thereby made accessible, whenever we have a mind to send any Troops into that Country, there is certainly no farther Occasion for the six Highland Companies, which are kept up only for preserving the Peace of that Country ; these Six Companies amount to above 500 Men, and the maintaining of them costs the Publick much above 5000 l. yearly ; this Expence may certainly be now saved, and all the Service they do, or can possibly do, may for the future be performed by Detachments from the Regiments, which are kept in that Part of the Island. These Things, Sir, I thought myself obliged to take Notice of, but I shall make no Motion, only I hope that they will be seriously considered, and that all proper Methods will be taken for lessening the Publick Charge as much as possible.’

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Hereupon Sir William Strickland stood up and said,
Sir,

Sir W. Strickland.

‘ I have had the Honour to serve for some time at the Board, for admitting Pensioners into Chelsea-Hospital ; I can answer for it, that in all my Time, and I believe I may say for several Years before, all imaginable Care has been taken, to admit none but those who were justly intitled to that publick Charity, or rather that publick Reward for long and faithful Services : None have ever been admitted but such as had been disabled in the Service, or such as had served their Country for at least twenty Years, and were discharged as unfit for farther Service. The Soldiers have always been obliged to bring Certificates from their Officers of the Time of their Service, or of the Manner of their having been disabled in the Service. We have been so cautious, that we have made the Fellows strip to the Skin, that we might examine them the more narrowly, and might be the better able to judge whether they were actually disabled and unfit for any farther Service ; and after such a strict Inquiry, we

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Sir J. Rushout.

could not in Conscience, we could not in Humanity, refuse to admit them.

Sir John Rushout spoke next :

Sir,

‘ It does appear strange to me, that notwithstanding our long Peace, the Number of those Pensioners, and the Charge the Publick is put to for maintaining them, should be every Day increasing: Twenty Years Services I must grant to be a long Term, but yet it is not always a proper Qualification; if a Man enters young into the Service, which most do, he may have been a Soldier for twenty Years, and yet very fit for Service, or for any Day Labour; and if such a Man be discharged, I see no Reason why the Publick should be obliged to maintain him; he may work for his daily Bread. The Publick ought not to encourage any Man to live idle, if he can possibly earn a Subsistence by his daily Labour: I believe, Sir, there are many, who are now Pensioners of Chelsea-Hospital, who have Wives and Children, and who not only can, but do earn as much by their Labour as might maintain them and their Families; what they have from the Publick only contributes to encourage and support their Extravagance: That Hospital was never designed for such Men; it was designed as a charitable Relief only for those, whose great Age, or great Sufferings in the publick Service, had rendered utterly incapable of maintaining themselves by their daily Labour, and such only can regularly be admitted as Pensioners upon the Publick.

Mr H. Pelham.

To this Mr Pelham answer'd,

Sir,

‘ I have had the Honour to be one of the Chelsea-Board for some Years, and am very certain that ever since I had any Concern in it, there have been few or no Impositions ever put upon the Commissioners; I could never indeed discover that any one Man was admitted, who was not justly intitled thereto. The worthy Gentleman, who spoke last, is mistaken, if he thinks, that the Number of the Pensioners of that College is this Year increased, upon the contrary the Number is diminished: There are twenty two Pensioners less this Year than there were the last; it is true, the Sum charged for that Hospital is larger now than it was last Year, but that proceeds from this being Leap-Year, so that there is a Day's Subsistence for the whole Number of Pensioners more than there was last Year, which amounts to a much larger Sum than the Savings, by the Decrease in the Number of Pensioners, does amount to.

‘ As for the great Increase of Pensioners upon that College within these few Years past, it is very easy to account for it, because there were some time ago two or three Regiments

ments brought over from Gibraltar and Port-Mahon, that had been in Garrison in those two Places for 15 or 16 Years, in all which time there had been few or no Men discharged upon account of Age or Infirmary, from either of those Regiments; the Reason of which, I suppose, was the great Expence of sending them home, and carrying over fresh Recruits in their room: These Soldiers having but very little Fatigue, the Officers found Means to make them perform all the Duty that was required of them, while they remained in Garrison; but upon their being brought home, the Change of the Air, added to their own Age and Infirmities, made most of them entirely unfit for a March, or for any Duty whatever; and it being then easy for the Officers to supply their Places with young Men that were fit for Service, great Numbers of them were discharged, so that I may say, that the most Part of those two or three Regiments came all upon the Hospital at once. Another Reason, Sir, that has contributed much to the Increase of those Pensioners, is, that there is as yet but a very bad Provision for decayed Soldiers in the Hospital in Ireland, which is the Cause, that whenever any Regiment is brought over from that Country in the Course of Changing, the old and disabled Men, who while in Ireland, did all they could to conceal their Age or Infirmary, then begin to solicit, and often obtain a Discharge and Certificate from their Officer, in order to get themselves entered as Pensioners in Chelsea College: This has been a Sort of Grievance, but his Majesty is doing all he can to get it rectify'd, as he does with respect to every Grievance as soon as ever he discovers it; and it is to be hoped, that he will have Success in his Endeavours as to this.

' The worthy Gentleman was in the right, when he said, that twenty Years Service was not always a proper Qualification; it is not always allowed of as such; I have myself known several Examples, when a sturdy well-looking Man has come with a proper Discharge and Certificate from his Officer, in order to be admitted upon the College, that the Board have been so far from admitting him, that they examined him as to the Method of his obtaining his Discharge, and if it appeared, that he had solicited the same, they have absolutely refused to admit him; upon the other hand, if it appeared that he had not solicited his Discharge, but was willing to continue in the Service, the Board has sent him back to the Regiment, with Orders to his Officer to receive him.

' As to the new Roads made through the Highlands of Scotland, they are certainly of great Use not only to that Country, but to the whole Nation, because of the easy Access that is thereby made to and from the Country; and the Expence will appear to be very small, when compared with the great

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great Charges, that have formerly been brought in, for marching Detachments through that Country; one would be surprized to see the Difference between the Sums charged for the making of those Roads, and the vast Sums charged for some of those Marches; and whoever will be at the pains to compare them together, must grant, that the honourable Gentleman, who had the Direction of making those Roads, has taken the utmost Care to see the Design executed in the most faithful and frugal Manner, and that he has thereby done a Piece of signal Service to his Country and to Posterity.

Mr W. Pulteney.

Then Mr Pulteney replied as follows :

Sir,

‘ I doubt not but all necessary Precautions are taken, at present, as to the admitting of Pensioners upon that College, but whatever Strictness may be observed in the Inquiries as to that Affair, there may notwithstanding now and then an Imposition happen; I believe the Inquiries were made as strictly formerly as they are now, yet I know that some Years ago there was one Fellow got himself admitted a Pensioner, as having had two of his Ribs broke by a Cannon Ball, though it was afterwards discovered that the Fellow’s Ribs were broke by a fall from a House, when he was serving the Builders as a Day-Labourer. The Roads made in the Highlands may be very good, that Country may be thereby rendered accessible, but certainly the more easy Access is made thereto, the less necessary it is to keep up the Independent Companies; and since we have been at the Expence of making the Country accessible, we may be relieved from the Charge of maintaining those Companies. I believe if the Case were examined into, there is not so much Money raised for the publick Service in all that Country, as will pay only those Independent Companies, and I do not see any Reason why the rest of the Nation should be put to any farther Expence that way; I have not as yet heard any Reason given for it, nor has there any Answer been made to my Objection against that Article of the publick Accounts. I know that, when Accounts have been demanded of the Produce of any Branch of the Revenue in that Country, a Right Honourable Person has been sometimes pleased to be facetious, and answer in the Exchequer Term *Nichil*, but such Affairs are a little too serious to be made a Joke of. I have no great Reason at present to expect any Reduction in our Standing-Army; but before I leave this Subject, I must beg leave to add, that if ever this Nation does arrive at the Happiness of seeing a Reduction, I hope his Majesty will take Care that entire Corps shall be reduced; for when Reduction is made in the Method lately observed, that is, by disband-

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ing so many Men in a Company, the old Men only are discharged, and as soon as they are discharged as Soldiers, they enter as Pensioners upon Chelsea-College, so that the Publick can never save much by any such Reduction.

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Hereupon Sir Robert Walpole stood up, and said,
Sir,

Sir R. Walpole.

‘ I am surpriz’d to hear Objections made against the Articles now mentioned ; they really seem to be made for the Sake of Humour only ; every one of the Articles that have been objected against is in itself so necessary, and so much Care has been taken in every one of them to reduce the Publick Expence as low as possible, that it would seem as if Gentlemen were resolved to find Fault with something. As to the Article of Chelsea-College, I am persuaded, that all possible Care has been taken to save the Publick Money ; no Man has been lately admitted, but one who appeared plainly to be either a Man who was grown old or infirm, or one who was actually disabled in the Service of his Country ; such surely are Objects of the Publick Charity ; and no Man who has a Regard for the Service, or for the Honour of his Country, will grudge a poor Subsistence to a brave Man, who by serving the Publick has rendered himself incapable to serve or provide for himself. Twenty Years Service only, is not, it never was, a Qualification sufficient by itself to intitle a Man to be admitted as a Pensioner upon Chelsea-College ; besides his Service, every Man who comes to be admitted, must have a regular Discharge from his Officer, and it is not to be presumed that any Officer will discharge a brave old Soldier, as long as he is any way fit for Service, even though he were to lose nothing by such a Discharge ; but we know that an Officer is a real Loser by every Discharge he grants ; what is allowed for Levy-Money is always paid to the Officer, whether he has an Occasion for any Recruits or no ; if he has no Occasion for Recruits, he puts it in his own Pocket, and if the Recruiting of his Regiment comes to more Money in a Year than the Allowance will answer, he must pay the Surplus out of his own Pocket ; can we then imagine that any Officer will discharge an able and a disciplin’d Soldier, and thereby put himself to a great Charge for a new Man to be put in his stead, besides the Trouble and Fatigue which the Officer must undergo to see such new Men trained up to Discipline ? Such a Supposition plainly appears to be unreasonable.

‘ It is very true, Sir, that when I came first into the Board for Chelsea-Hospital, which was soon after the late Queen’s Death, there was a strict Scrutiny into the Affairs of that Hospital, and by the Consequences such Scrutiny appeared to be necessary ; for though we found the Accounts all settled
and

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and signed by the former Commissioners, yet upon Examination we discovered, that there were no less than 7000 Names put upon the List of Chelsea-Pensioners, more than we could possibly find Persons to answer to, and a great many of those Persons who did answer to the Names put upon the List were Irish, who had no Title to have been admitted into that Hospital; yet if the Change had not happened at that Time, it is certain that the whole Money charged would have been advanced and paid to the Persons, that were principally concerned in inserting so many Forgeries into that List: From thence we may judge how necessary a Scrutiny was at that Time, and what a large Sum of Money was saved to the Publick by such Scrutiny. This, Sir, was one of the dark Pieces of Management in that Administration, which never could be cleared up, at least it was never publicly avowed what was meant thereby. I remember likewise that at the Time of that Scrutiny, there was a great Reduction among the Letter-Men, yet that is no Argument that it is not necessary to have any Letter-Men at all; it is but reasonable that some poor Fellows, who have served long as Serjeants or Corporals of Horse, or Gentlemen Cadees, who have had the Misfortune to be disabled in the Service, should be allowed some Sort of Distinction, and have a little more Pay than a common Soldier, especially considering that such an Allowance costs the Publick but a meer Trifle.

‘ As to the Roads made through the Highlands, I have heard them so much applauded by every body without Doors, and the Sum charged upon that Account is so inconsiderable, that I wonder to hear any Member of this House take Notice of it. That there was a Necessity for making such Roads, must be evident to every Man who considers the Circumstances of the Nation, and of that Country in particular. It is well known that whenever any Design was set on Foot against the Government, or any Invasion intended, the first Scene has been always laid in that Country; that Country was formerly so inaccessible, that the Enemies of the Government could safely land or rendezvous there, and could easily defend themselves till they found an Opportunity of coming down to the Low-Country, and raising a Disturbance through the whole Nation. It is very true, that the Men of that Country are but Men, they are in themselves no better than other Men, and were terrible only because they could not be come at; from their inaccessible Country they made Inroads and plundered their Neighbours, and when a sufficient Force was raised against them, they retired again and took Shelter among their inaccessible Rocks and Mountains, where it was impossible to come at them; this only
made

made them terrible, but by the Highways that are now made, this Cause of Terror is removed; their Neighbours are made easy, and that Country will no longer be a safe landing or parading Place for those who come to attack us, nor will it be a safe Refuge for those who fly from the Justice of the Nation.

‘ Though these Roads be now finished, and brought to a Perfection far beyond what could have been expected in so short a Time, or for so small a Sum. yet, Sir, the Independent Companies are not thereby rendered unnecessary; I have been informed by every Person, who has been in or knows the Country and the Nature of the People who are the Inhabitants thereof, that the keeping of those Independent Companies in the Country is by much the best Method of keeping the People in Order; and if those Companies were to be disbanded, and the Service to be performed by Detachments from the Regiments in the Low-Country, I am sure the Publick would save nothing, for notwithstanding the Highways that are now made, the marching of those Detachments backwards and forwards, and the sending them Provisions, which must be all sent from Places in the Low-Country at a great Distance, would cost the Publick full as much, if not more, every Year, than the Maintenance of those Six Independent Companies now amounts to. As for what Money may be returned from that Country for the publick Service, I do not know; but it is well known that every Part of that Country pays the Land-Tax, and every other Tax which they are subjected to by the Articles of the Union, and consequently they must certainly bear a Part of the publick Charge, and have from thence a just Title to be protected and defended, as well as any other Part of the Nation; North-Britain is a Part of Britain as well as South Britain is; it is the same Country, and I hope in all the Resolutions of this House it will always be look’d on as such.’

After this the Question being put on the said Motion, the same was agreed to.

February 1. The above Resolution, being reported, was agreed to by the House.

Feb. 2. The House order’d, that the proper Officer should lay before them all such Proceedings, Papers, and other Instruments, as he had in his Custody, relating to the Sale of the Estate of James late Earl of Derwentwater.

This Estate was forfeited on account of his being concern’d in the Rebellion in 1715, [See Vol. I. p. 59.] but nevertheless so settled, that upon the Death of his Son John, then a Child, without Issue-Male, the Remainder was to devolve upon his younger Brother Charles Radcliffe: But he being also engaged in the said Rebellion, had thereby forfeited such

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1731-2.

The Motion relating to Chelsea-Hospital, agreed to.

The several Proceedings, relating to the Sale of the Estate of James late Earl of Derwentwater, laid before the House.

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his Expectation of that Estate ; which was sold by the Commissioners of the forfeited Estates, which devolved to the Crown, for the Sum of only 1060 l. And the above-mentioned John, Son of James Earl of Derwentwater, dying December 31st, 1731, in the 18th Year of his Age, the Estate fell of Course to those who had bought that forfeited Reversion ; and being reckoned at the Value of about 7000 l. *per Annum*, such a Purchase became the Subject of publick Observation, and some Circumstances also occurring, that bred Suspensions about the Methods used in gaining so great a Bargain, the Lord Gage took Notice of it to the House, and thereupon mov'd for the foregoing Order.

Petitions from
Pennsylvania, Mas-
sachusetts-Bay, and
Virginia, and of
the Sugar-Colony
Bill.

Feb. 3. A Petition of Ferdinando John Paris, Agent for Pennsylvania ; likewise of Francis Wilks, Agent for Massachusetts-Bay ; and also of John Randolph, Agent for Virginia, against the Sugar-Colony Bill was presented and read, and ordered to lie on the Table 'till the second Reading of the said Bill ; and that the Petitioners might then be heard by their Council.

Petition from the
Proprietors of the
Charitable Corpora-
tion, complain-
ing of the Mis-
management of their
Directors, &c.

The same Day Sir Thomas Robinson presented to the House a Petition of the Proprietors of the Charitable Corporation, complaining, That by the most notorious Breach of Trust in several Persons, to whom the Care and Management of their Affairs was committed, the said Corporation had been defrauded of the greatest Part of their Capital amounting to several hundred thousand Pounds ; and that all the Petitioners were become great Sufferers thereby, and many of them reduced to the utmost Degree of Misery and Distress ; and alledging, that some, who had been guilty of these Frauds, had transported themselves to Parts beyond the Seas, and carried with them some of the Books and Effects of the said Corporation ; and that there was great Reason to believe, such an immense Sum of Money could not have been imbezzeled without the Connivance and Participation of others, who continued here ; and that the Petitioners were unable to come at the Knowledge of their Combinations, or to bring them to Justice, without the Aid of the Power and Authority of that House ; and therefore praying, that the House would vouchsafe to inquire into the State of the said Corporation, and the Conduct of those who had had the Care and Management of their Affairs ; and would give such Relief to the Petitioners, as to the House should seem meet. This Petition being read, Mr Oglethorp stood up and spoke as follows ;

Mr Oglethorp's
Speech on that
Occasion.

Sir,

‘ I am persuaded that this Petition will be received in a Manner deserving of the unhappy Case of the Sufferers, and of the Justice of this House : I can hardly suspect that any Gentleman

Gentleman, that has the Honour to be a Member of this House, will oppose giving all the Relief we can to such a Number of unhappy People, who have been so much cheated and injured; yet because I have heard it whispered without Doors, that we ought not to receive this Petition, upon account, as is pretended, that the Common Seal was not regularly affix'd thereto, I think it necessary to take some Notice of that Objection, in case any such be to be made; I must say, that if there be any Irregularity as to the affixing of the Publick Seal of that Company to this Petition, it is in my Opinion so far from being an Objection to our receiving the Petition, that it is a very strong Reason for it; if there be any Fault in Form, it is the Fault of those who had the keeping of the Common Seal, and as they may perhaps be some of those against whom the Complaints made, and who may upon Inquiry be found by this House to be the guilty Persons, we are therefore to look upon any Neglect in Form to be a wilful Fault, and a Plot laid for preventing the Truth's being brought to Light; such Plots will, I hope, be always defeated by the Wisdom of this House, and whenever it can be discovered that any Frauds have been committed, or any indirect Practices used by those who have the keeping of any Common Seal, this House will, I hope, make use of that Power, with which it is by our Constitution invested, for detecting and punishing the Criminals: For my own part, I always was for encouraging the Design upon which this Corporation was at first established; People may call it Charitable or not, as they please; but I always looked upon it as an Act of Charity, to let necessitous Persons have Money to borrow upon easier Terms than they could have it elsewhere; Money like other Things is but a Commodity, and in the way of Dealing, the Use thereof, as well as of other Things, is looked upon to be worth as much as People can get for it; if this Corporation let necessitous People have the Use of their Money, at a cheaper Rate than any other Person would lend Money at, they were certainly useful to the Publick, and were so far to be reckoned a Charitable Corporation; and if they had asked more than what was usual to be given, they could not have had any Customers; the Design was therefore in itself good and useful, but the better the Design was, the more those Persons deserve to be punished, who by their Frauds have disappointed the Publick of reaping the Benefit, which might have accrued by an honest and faithful Execution of so good an Undertaking.'

Sir Thomas Robinson spoke next,

Sir,

'There is no doubt but that a great many Frauds have been committed in the Affair now before us; so large a Sum

Sir T. Robinson's
Motion for refer-
ring the same Pe-
tition to a Com-
mittee of Secretaries.

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of Money could not have been lost in so short a Time, by the greatest Misfortunes that possibly could have happen'd; nor could the greatest Mismanagement reduce such a Capital to nothing in so few Years, without some Fraud at Bottom; and as Matters now stand, every Man, who had any Hand in this unhappy Affair, is accused by the General Voice of the People; every Man concerned is presumed to have been a Parraker in the Crime, and the Innocent suffer in their Characters, as well as in their Estates, by the Frauds of the Guilty. As the Capital Stock of this Corporation was divided among a great Number of Proprietors, the Sufferers by these Frauds must be very numerous, and among them there are without doubt a great many who are quite undone; it is enough to move the Compassion of any Man to think, that Gentlemen and Ladies, who have been bred to an affluent Fortune, should thus at once be reduced to Misery and Starving; and that without any Fault of their own, but merely by the Frauds or by the Neglect of those, to whom they had intrusted the Management of their Estates. This is a Case, Sir, that deserves to be inquired into in an extraordinary Manner; such innocent Sufferers deserve the most speedy Redress that the Justice of this Nation can admit of; it would be Cruelty to leave it to the ordinary Forms, or to subject it to the long Delays that necessarily attend the ordinary Course of Justice; and therefore I hope, that no Member of this House will refuse to give ear to the just Complaint of the Petitioners, or appear to be against giving them all the Redress, that can be given, in a Parliamentary Method of Proceeding. There are, I think, three Things that must come under our Consideration in the present Case: We must endeavour to relieve as much as possible those who are the unhappy Sufferers in this Affair; We must endeavour as much as we can to discover those who are really guilty, and punish them as severely as their Crimes deserve; And we must endeavour to vindicate the Characters of those who are innocent, and who at present suffer by being blended with those that are guilty. These Things demand a most strict and a most exact Scrutiny into the Management of the Affairs of this Corporation, and therefore this Petition ought not only to be referred to a Committee, but to a select Committee of a certain Number of Members to be chose by Ballot, which Committee ought to be a Committee of Secrecy.

Capt. Vernon.

Mr. Hopkins.

Captain Vernon agreed in every Thing to what Sir Thomas Robinson had moved for, except as to the Committee's being a Committee of Secrecy, in which he was seconded by Mr Hopkins, who said, 'That a Publick Committee would be more for the Purpose, because in such Case he and every

every other Member of the House, who could give them any Information, could then attend and know what they were about, by which they would learn how to assist the Committee in making Discoveries, and clearing up Facts which they might be in any Doubt about.' He added, ' That in the Management of this Affair, he could not but take Notice of one Fact, which to him appeared something extraordinary ; which was, that at one Time there were Bonds or Notes of that Corporation issued, to the Value of about 120,000*l.* about which Time the York-Buildings Stock rose from 18 or 19 to 36 or thereabout *per Cent.* This sudden Rise, he believed, was principally owing to the Bonds and Notes of the Charitable Corporation, which at that time went about current and in great Plenty in Change-Alley.'

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Sir Robert Sutton and Mr Denis Bond said, ' That as they had the Misfortune to be named as Managers of the Affairs of that Corporation, they thought themselves obliged to say something upon the present Occasion : That they were both very considerable Proprietors, and consequently were very great Sufferers, but though they had been named as Managers, yet they were but seldom there, and knew very little of what was done.' Sir Archibald Grant said, ' That as he likewise had the Misfortune to be a Manager, he thought himself obliged to say something to the Affair then before them ; that he also was a very considerable Proprietor, had no less than 1500 Shares of their Capital in his own Right, which had cost him above 8000*l.* That he was very willing the Management should be inquired into, because he hoped the Fraudulent and Deceitful would thereby be distinguished from those, who had been deceived and imposed upon.'

Sir R. Sutton's, Mr. D. Bond's, And Sir A. Grant's Defence, as Managers of the Charitable Corporation.

Several Members spoke for the Committee's being a Secret Committee, because it had been always observed, that such Committees made the most narrow and the most speedy Inquiry into the Affairs that had been referred to them : That if every Member had a Liberty of coming there, it would occasion such Disturbance and so many Delays, that it would be impossible for the Committee to finish their Report, or for the House to give any Relief to the unhappy Sufferers, during that Session of Parliament : That its being a Committee of Secrecy could not be any Loss, as to their getting all possible Information from the other Members of the House, who could make any Discoveries ; for that the Gentlemen of the Committee would be known, and it was to be presumed that every Member, that could make any Discovery of Consequence, would immediately give Information thereof to some of the Gentlemen of the Committee.

Then

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1731-32.

The above Petition
referred to a Com-
mittee of 21 Mem-
bers; and a Mo-
tion made for the
same being a Com-
mittee of Secrecy.

Then it was resolved, without Opposition, That the said Petition be referred to a Committee of Twenty One, to be chosen by Balloting: But a Motion being made, and the Question put, That the said Committee be a Committee of Secrecy, it pass'd in the Negative by 212 Votes against 132.

It may be proper on this Occasion to give a short View of the Nature of this Corporation. It was first created in the Year 1707; their professed Intention was to lend Money, at legal Interest, to the Poor upon small Pledges; and to Persons of better Rank, upon an answerable Security of Goods; and their Capital was then limited to 30,000 £. In the Year 1722, the Crown gave Licence to them to increase the same to 100,000 £. and again, in 1728, they received Licence for a Capital of 300,000 £. and, in 1730, for 600,000 £. This Charter being granted to the Corporation, they made Application to have the same confirmed by Act of Parliament in the last Session, and a Bill for that Purpose passed the House of Commons; but there was such vigorous Opposition made to it, that it was dropt in the House of Lords. However, upon the Support of the Royal Charter, the Corporation went on; but in October 1731, two of their chief Officers, viz. George Robinson, Esq; Member for Marlow, their Cashier, and Mr John Thompson, their Warehouse-keeper, disappear'd on the same Day. This gave the Proprietors a very great Alarm; and three several General Courts were held, in which a Committee was appointed, from among the chief Proprietors, to inspect the State of their Affairs. By the Report brought in by that Committee it was found, that for a Capital of above 500,000 £. no Equivalent was found to the Value of 30,000 £. the Remainder having been disposed of, by Ways that no one was able to give Account of.

Papers relating to
the Sugar-Colonies
presented from the
Board of Trade.

Feb. 4. Mr Docminique presented to the House several Papers from the Board of Trade, relating to the Dispute between his Majesty's Sugar-Colonies and the Northern Colonies in America.

Accounts presented
relating to the
Salt-Duty.

Feb. 7. Several Accounts relating to the Salt-Duty were presented by the Commissioners of that Duty.

Sir R. Walpole's
Motion for reading
the Pension-Bill
the third Time.

The same Day a Motion was made by Sir Robert Walpole, for having the Pension-Bill read the third Time, on the 10th Instant, in a full House, because he did not know but that he might then offer several Reasons against it, and endeavour to shew, that it was neither a proper Bill for redressing the Evil complain'd of, nor was it offer'd at a proper Season.

Mr W. Pulteney.

Hereupon Mr Pulteney said, ' That that Bill had been two Years successively before that House; during which Time they had had many Opportunities to consider every Clause in it,

it, every one of which had been concerted by the ablest Men in the Nation : That the Bill was certainly a good and a necessary Bill, was very much wanted, and had the general Voice of the Nation in its Favour : That tho' the other House had twice thrown it out, yet he could not think that any Man of Honour could be against it ; what their Reasons were for so doing, he could not tell ; but it seemed, and he had even heard it whisper'd, that they were tired of doing **** Work ; they were resolv'd to do no more of it, and if so, says he, it is become necessary for us to do our own **** Work ourselves.' But Sir Robert Walpole's Motion not being insisted on, no Order was made.

Feb. 9. A Petition from New-York, from Rhode-Island, and the Island of Providence, also of New-Jersey, and of South-Carolina, were presented against the Sugar-Colony-Bill, and were severally order'd to lie on the Table till the second Reading of the said Bill, and that the Petitioners might then be heard by their Counsel.

The same Day the House resolv'd itself into a Committee of the whole House, to consider farther of Ways and Means for raising the Supply granted to his Majesty ; and the several Papers and Accounts relating to the Salt-Duty having been laid before this Committee, Sir Robert Walpole stood up and spoke as follows :

Mr Speaker,

' As there is nothing his Majesty has more at Heart than the giving all possible Ease to his Subjects ; so whenever he is necessarily oblig'd to desire Assistance from them for the immediate Support of the Government, he desires that they would choose those Ways and Means for raising the annual Supplies, which are least burthenfome to the People, and which make the Load fall equally upon the Subjects in general. When Money is to be rais'd for the Publick Good, for the Security of all, he thinks that every one ought to contribute his Share, in Proportion to the Benefit that he is thereby to receive. In pursuance of these his Majesty's Inclinations, and in pursuance of what I look upon as the most equitable Rule for raising Contributions, I shall take the Liberty of proposing to this House a Method for raising some Part of the Supply for this present Year, which by falling equally upon all, will be burthenfome to none ; and by which those who have stood the Brunt of the Day, those who have been oppress'd for many Years, may in some Measure be relieved.

This, Sir, is the only View I have in making the Proposal ; after it is made, the House may then take it into their Consideration, and each Member certainly will judge of it as he thinks proper. If it is approved of, I shall rejoice in
having

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Petition from
New-York, Rhode-
Island, Providence,
New-Jersey, and
South-Carolina a-
gainst the Sugar-
Colony-Bill.

Sir Robert Wal-
pole's Motion for
reviving the Salt-
Duty.

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having been the Author of a Measure, which I think will contribute so much to the Good of my Country in general, and to the Relief of those who have for many Years borne too great a Share of the Publick Burthen; and if it happens not to meet with the Approbation of this House, I shall have the Testimony of a good Conscience for my Comfort; for since I have no other View but only a sincere and an honest Intention to give Relief to my Fellow-Subjects, I never can have Occasion to repent, nor do I any way dread those Reproaches, which may be unjustly thrown upon me, or upon the Measure I am to propose; for these are Things which in all publick Transactions every Man must expect: No publick Measure can be proposed, but what may be against the Private Interest and Selfish Views of some particular Men; but I fear not the Enmity, and I despise the Revilings of those, who prefer their own little selfish Views to the general Good and Welfare of their Country.

‘ I have, Sir, with the deepest Concern observed, how heavy and how unequal a Burthen has been long borne by the Landed Gentlemen of this Kingdom: I have long had it in my View to procure them some Ease as soon as possible, and am pleased to think that an Opportunity now offers itself for doing what I have so long had much at Heart; and I hope I shall have the good Luck to find that my Sentiments are approved of by this House; and the Approbation of such an Assembly I shall always look upon as the greatest Honour done to any Proposal made by me. As to the Manner, Sir, of raising Taxes upon the People, it is a certain Maxim, that that Tax which is the most equal and the most general, is the most just, and the least burthensome: Where every Man contributes a small Share, a great Sum may be raised for the Publick Service, without any Man’s being sensible of what he pays; whereas a small Sum, raised upon a few, lies heavy upon each particular Man, and is the more grievous, in that it is unjust; for where the Benefit is mutual, the Expence ought to be in common. Of all the Taxes I ever could think of, there is not one more general, nor one less felt, than that of the Duty upon Salt. The Duty upon Salt is a Tax that every Man in the Nation contributes to according to his Circumstances and Condition in Life; every Subject contributes something; if he be a poor Man, he contributes so small a Trifle, it will hardly bear a Name; if he be rich, he lives more luxuriously, and consequently contributes more; and if he be a Man of a great Estate, he keeps a great Number of Servants, and must therefore contribute a great deal. Upon the other hand, there is no Tax that ever was laid upon the People of this Nation, that is more unjust and unequal than the Land-Tax. The

Land-

Land-holders bear but a small Proportion to the People of this Nation, or of any Nation; yet no Man contributes any the least Share to this Tax, but he that is possessed of a Land Estate; and yet this Tax has been continued without Intermission for above these 40 Years: It has continued so long, and has lain so heavy, that I may venture to say, many a landed Gentleman in this Kingdom has thereby been utterly ruined and undone.

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‘ This Consideration, Sir, has prompted me to endeavour to procure them some Relief, and for this end I shall venture to make the following Motion. ‘ That towards raising the Supply granted to his Majesty, the several Duties on home-made Salt, granted to the late King William and Queen Mary, by an Act of the 5th and 6th Years of their Reign, for a Term of Years, and afterwards made perpetual; and also the additional Duties on Salt, granted by an Act of the 9th and 10th Years of his said late Majesty King William, and all the Duties chargeable on home-made Salt in Great-Britain, which by an Act of the 3d Year of his present Majesty’s Reign, ceased and determined on the 25th of Day of December 1730, be revived and granted to his Majesty, his Heirs and Successors, for the Term of three Years, from the 25th of March next, 1732.’

‘ If I have, Sir, the good Luck to succeed so far in my Wishes, as to have this Motion approved of, I shall then beg Leave to move, That the Sum of One Shilling in the Pound, and no more, be raised for this Year upon Land; but if this House does not agree to the Motion I now make, I must in that Case move for a Land-Tax of Two Shillings in the Pound; for so much will be absolutely necessary for the current Service of the Year. This, Sir, is what a sincere and a hearty Desire to do Service to my Country, and Justice to my Fellow-Subjects, has emboldened me to propose. I declare I had no other View, but that of procuring some Ease, some Relief to the Landed-Interest. If this be agreed to, some Means may be fallen upon to relieve them of the whole again next Year; and I shall always look upon it as a great Honour, that after a Continuance of a Land-Tax of four, three, or two Shillings at least in the Pound for 40 Years together, it was at last reduced to One, at a Time when I had a Share in the Administration of the Affairs of this Nation. Before I leave this Subject, I must intreat every one that hears me, to consider how many Landed-Gentlemen of ancient Families there are in Britain, who have but small Estates, how many of them have great Families to support and many Children to provide for, and how many even of those who have large Estates in Land are so charged with Mortgages, Jointures, or Rent-Charges, that it is hardly

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possible for them to support their Character in the Country where they live, though they were not to pay one Shilling towards a Land-Tax.

‘ Our Nobility and Gentry were once famous for Hospitality and Generosity ; if the unavoidable Necessities of State have obliged them for so many Years to abridge their Expence, and contract their Manner of living, let us do at least what is in our Power to restore them to their former State, by relieving them of a Part of that Burthen, which they, and they only, have for so many Years been charged with.

Mr Walt, Plumer. This Motion being seconded, Mr Walter Plumer rose up and spoke as follows.

Sir,

‘ I agree with the Right Hon. Gentleman who made the Motion, in this, ‘ That the landed Gentlemen of this Nation have been for many Years subject to very grievous Taxes ; the Land-Tax is not the only Tax that has been heavy upon them, but every other Tax falls at last upon them with its greatest Weight : It is indeed high Time that some of the Burthens should be taken off their Shoulders, and it was reasonable for them to have expected from his Majesty’s most gracious Speech, that in this Session of Parliament they would have met with some Relief ; but how much surprized must they be, when they hear, that all the Relief that has been proposed is, to take off one Tax which lies heavy upon them only, and in the room thereof to lay on another, which will lie equally heavy upon most of them, and at the same Time will be a most insupportable Burthen upon every one of their Fellow-Subjects ? The proposing this as a Relief for the Landed Gentlemen appears to me in so odd a Light, that I cannot well comprehend how it can be expected, that any Gentleman in England should be so imposed on. It is so short a Time ago, that we must all remember how this Tax upon Salt came to be taken off. His Majesty, by his most gracious Speech from the Throne, only two Years ago [See p. 52.] shewed, that he was sensible how much the Trade and Manufactures of this Nation suffered, by the many Taxes the poor Tradesmen and Labourers were subject to ; he therefore recommended to us the taking off some of those Taxes, which were most burthenfome upon the Poor ; and at that Time, Sir, it was the Opinion of this very House, that this Tax upon Salt was the most burthenfome upon the Poor, and the most pernicious to the Trade of this Kingdom, of all the Taxes we are liable to. This, Sir, was one of the many Reasons for taking it off, and why we should so suddenly alter our Opinion, and resolve to grind the Face of the Poor, in order to relieve a few of the Rich, I can see

no Reason ; I say, Sir, a few of the Rich, for it may be easily made appear, that the Relief propos'd will be no Relief at all to the Landed Gentlemen of small Fortunes, and even to the Rich it will be but a small present Ease, which will be attended with most heavy and most fatal Consequences.

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‘ I had the Honour, Sir, to be one of those who were instrumental in getting this Clog upon our Trade removed ; I hope I shall have the Honour to be one of those who shall be instrumental in preventing its being forced upon us again ; for if this Duty be revived, I despair of ever seeing it again taken off. It is not always a certain Maxim, that those Taxes which are most general are least burthensome ; upon the contrary, it holds true in all Countries, and at all Times, that those Taxes which are laid upon the Luxuries of Mankind are the least burthensome ; and I believe in the most luxurious Country upon Earth, I am sure as to this Country, it cannot be said that they are the most general : After a Nation is brought to that woeful Pass, that they must extend their Taxes farther than the Luxuries of their Country, it is certain, that those Taxes which are rais'd with the least Charge to the Publick, are the most convenient and the easiest to the People ; but in all Cases particular Care ought to be taken not to tax those Things which are necessary for the very Subsistence of the Poor ; such Taxes always occasion Murmurs and Sedition among the People, and in such a Country as this, which subsists by Trade and Manufacture, such Taxes bring sure and inevitable Destruction ; for they enhance the Price of all Necessaries of Life, the Wages of the Tradesman and Manufacturer must consequently rise higher and where the Wages of the Workmen are high, the Manufactures of that Country never can be sold so cheap as the Manufactures of other Countries ; this must at last destroy their whole Trade, and I am convinced that no Landed Gentleman in England will chuse to save a Shilling in the Pound as to the Land-Tax, even though he were to pay nothing in Lieu thereof, when by such a Saving he brings Ruin upon the Trade and Manufactures of his native Country.

‘ I have, Sir, always appeared, and I hope ever shall appear zealous for the Support of the present Royal Family ; as a Friend to our most happy Constitution, as a faithful Subject to his Majesty, I must declare against reviving this Tax upon Salt ; for granting that the reducing of a Shilling in the Pound upon the Land-Tax, by the Revival of this upon Salt, were a real Relief to the Landed Gentlemen, which is very far from being the Case, yet we must allow that for one, that is eas'd or oblig'd by the reducing of the Land-Tax, there will be 99 disoblig'd by the Revival of the Tax

upon Salt ; this must occasion such a general Dissatisfaction, and so much Grumbling amongst the People against his Majesty, that the keeping up a Standing Army will become necessary for supporting him against the Disaffected ; and by Experience we know, that where the Disaffection becomes very general, even the Army is not to be depended on, for in such Case most of them would probably join with the Discontented : It would become necessary for the Security of his Majesty's Person and Government, to bring in an Army of Foreign Troops to prey upon the Bowels of our Mother-Country.

I have, Sir, as much Sympathy and Compassion as any Man for the great Distresses that have been brought upon many of our Landed Gentlemen ; and I flattered myself with the pleasing Hope, that they were now to be relieved ; now when there is a profound Tranquility established both Abroad and at Home, I could not so much as imagine, that it would be necessary to continue all our Taxes, and I could far less imagine that any Proposal would be made for relieving us of one Tax, by laying on another much more grievous. No Man can expect that the Landed Gentlemen in England have so little Sense as to be cajoled in such a Manner. The Land-Tax, it is true, takes from the Landed Gentleman a Part of his Rent yearly. but the Salt-Tax, being a Charge upon our Trade and Manufactures, will at last disable his Tenants from paying him any Rent ; and besides, it makes the Maintaining even of his own Family much more expensive, so that at the End of the Year he will find himself no Gainer upon the Main, and his Tenants being ruined and undone, the Rents and the Value of his Estate will be decreasing yearly. I only desire that every Landed Gentleman, that hears me, would consider what he could make of his Estate if we had no Trade, no Manufactures, nor any Number of populous trading Towns in England. Whoever considers this, must conclude that, in most Parts of England, the Landed Estates would not in that Case bring in yearly to their Landlords near the Rent they do at present, no, nor one Quarter thereof. Who then will be such a Fool as to desire to be relieved of One Shilling in the Pound upon the Land-Tax, when he must pay as much in another Way, for the Salt made use of in his Family, and when at the same Time he diminishes the yearly Value of his Estate much more than one Shilling in the Pound ; nay, much more than any Land-Tax ever amounted to in England. The Land-Tax, Sir, is but an annual Diminution of a Gentleman's Estate ; he may be free of it, or of a Part of it, the succeeding Year : But if by the Decay of our Trade, and the Charge that is laid upon the poor Farmer, he be obliged to lower

the Rents of his Estate, that will be a Diminution which I am afraid will endure for ever.

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‘ Before I have done, I must, Sir, take Notice, that the Salt-Duty, or a considerable Part thereof, was formerly appropriated to the Sinking Fund ; yet this Duty was but two Years ago thought so grievous and so prejudicial to our Trade, that we then made no Scruple of encroaching a little even upon that Sacred Fund, in order to ease the People of so pernicious and burthensome a Tax : I am sorry to see the Opinion of any Gentleman, as to this Tax, so much altered in so short a Time : but if we do alter our Opinion, and revive this Tax, it certainly ought to be appropriated again to that useful Fund ; if we do revive it without any such Appropriation, we make a most dangerous Precedent ; whenever any of these Taxes, that are now appropriated to the Sinking Fund, are wanted for another Use, it is but taking them off for one Year, and laying them on the next for a new Purpose ; thus the Sinking Fund may be at last entirely exhausted, and our Debts remain for ever unpaid, without lessening any of our Taxes.

Capt. Vernon spoke next :

Capt. Vernon.

Mr Speaker,

‘ I hope every Gentleman in this House has perused the short Account of the Money, which has been brought into his Majesty’s Exchequer, by the Produce of the Salt-Duty from that Part of Great Britain, called Scotland, for the last ten Years ; I have looked for that Account but can find but one Article, and that Article is next to nothing. In the Space of ten Years, not one Shilling was ever brought into the Exchequer, from the Salt-Duty in that Country : How then can this Tax be said to be an equal Tax, when such a considerable Part of this Kingdom never paid one Farthing towards it ; even by the Proposal now made, they are not to pay near so much as we are to pay in South-Britain ; and of that small Proportion that is to be laid upon them, it is probable no Part will ever come to the publick Account : This Tax must therefore be unequal, because we in England are to bear the Whole of the Burden ; Scotland is to bear no Part, and yet they are by the Articles of the Union obliged to bear their proportional Part of all new Taxes, more especially those which are raised for the Current Service of the Year. If it be said, that the People in that Country are not able to pay this whole Tax, it is a good Argument against the Tax in general ; for no Tax ought to be laid upon the People, but those to which they can all contribute their Share : The People of England ought not to be charged with a Duty, and the People of Scotland left free ; such unequal Charges

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Charges will soon make every Man in England wish that the Union had never been made.

'Tis true, Sir, I cannot but applaud the Gentlemen of that Country, for appearing in favour of the Tax upon Salt ; it is shewing a laudable Zeal for the proper Interest of their native Country : It is laying a Tax upon us, to which they contribute nothing, in place of a Tax, to which they have always contributed an equal Share. This, Sir, may justify their Conduct as to the Question now in hand, but I hope the Gentlemen of the South Parts of Britain will shew the same Concern for the Interest of their Part of the Island ; and I am glad to find that so many of them do shew such a Concern, for it appeared to me Yesterday, that the Question was carried against the South Parts of the Island, by the Votes of those Gentlemen, who come from the North. [*Here he was called to Order, after which he went on*] Sir, I design no Reflection upon any Man ; but the Affair before us is of the utmost Consequence to the Interest and Trade of the whole Kingdom ; our Liberties, our Properties, and every Thing that is dear to us is at Stake. This seems to be a Step towards introducing a General Excise, which is inconsistent with the Liberties of a free People ; and Sir, when Life, Liberty, or Property is concerned, it will be found that every Man will fight ; a Country Clown in Huddon-Gray may perhaps shew as much Courage, and fight as well as a Soldier in Red : What ! do we think, because a Fellow is a Beau, and dresses himself up with Powder and Essences, that therefore he has more Courage than another Man ? I suspect there are many of those fine Gentlemen, who are afraid of letting the Wind blow upon them, for fear of blowing the Powder out of their Wigs, that could not, perhaps, bear the Smell of Gun-Powder. As the Affair before us is of the utmost Consequence, so it ought to give us the more Concern, that if it passes in this House, there are no Hopes in the other : In the other House, we know, Sir, there is a peculiar Bench, which will [*Here he was again called to Order, and was told by Mr Speaker, That no Gentleman was to throw Reflections upon any Body of Men, nor was any Member of that House, in any Thing he said, to take Notice of what was done, or what might be done in the other, then the Captain went on*] Sir, It was not possible I could make any Reflection upon any Man, or upon any Sett of Men, for I had drawn no Conclusion. But let us do what we will, let both Houses, if they have a mind, pass this Bill, it is so directly opposite to the Interest of the Nation, and to the Interest of our present happy Establishment, that I am convinced his Majesty will refuse giving it the Sanction of the Royal Assent.

Then

Then Mr Horatio Walpole stood up, and said,

Sir,

‘ I find some of those Gentlemen, who have spoken upon the Affair in hand, are quite mistaken as to the Motion that has been made. If any new and unheard of Tax had been thereby proposed, they might have some Reason for those Fears, which they have represented to us in so strong a Light ; Murmurings and Grumbings among the People might be apprehended ; but the Tax proposed is no new Tax, it is only proposed to revive a Tax which was raised upon the People of England for 34 Years together, and was always paid by them, without the least Grumbling or Complaint. By Experience, Sir, we are convinced that it is no way burthen-some upon the People ; and indeed, it is so little felt by them, that even since it was taken off, there is hardly a Man in the Kingdom that has been sensible of the Ease, or has in any manner expressed his Satisfaction therewith : This shews that it may be revived without any Danger of overcharging any particular Man, or any Sort of Men. Every Man, I believe, that contributes towards the Land-Tax, is fully sensible of the Burthen that is thereby laid upon him ; but who is it that ever was sensible of what he paid towards the Salt-Duty, or has felt any Ease since it was taken off ? It is a Duty that is paid by such a Multitude of People, that no single Man can any way feel what he pays thereto, which is a most evident Demonstration that it is one of the most easy Ways we can chuse, for raising Money for the necessary Supplies of the Government.

‘ Those Gentlemen, who talk so much of its being destructive to our Trade and Manufactures, ought to come to Particulars ; they ought to shew what Trade or Manufacture was lost or injured, during the 34 Years that the Tax continued to be paid by the People of England ; they ought to shew what Manufactures have become cheaper, or what Sort of Tradesmen’s Wages have been lowered, since the abolishing of this Tax : If any one such Effect could be made appear, I should believe they had some Reason for what they say ; but when the contrary Facts appear to be true, I cannot join in Opinion with them. During the whole Time that this Tax continued, there never was any one Manufacture thereby lost, our Trade never flourished more than it did in that Course of Time ; and since the Tax was taken off, we all know that no Trade or Manufacture has been thereby improved, nor have the Wages of one Workman in the Kingdom been diminished ; the pretended fatal Consequences of this Tax must therefore be all imaginary.

‘ As this Tax upon Salt is one of the most equal and easy Taxes on the People, so there is not any one Tax can be proposed,

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1731-32.

Mr H. Walpole.

Anno 5. Geo. 1.
1731-32.

proposed, that may be raised with less Expence to the Publick; The Method of raising it costs but very little more than the raising of the Land-Tax will cost; and whatever Difference there may be is much more than attoned for, by the Justice and Equality of the Tax upon Salt, and by its being so general, that it becomes altogether insensible; whereas the Land-Tax is one of the most unequal, and one of the most grievous upon those who pay it, of any Tax that ever was raised in this Country. It is a Tax that is wholly charged upon a very few of the Inhabitants of this Island, who have been for many Years obliged to bear the greatest Part of the Publick Charge, and have many of them been ruined and undone for the Benefit and Advantage of others. If we but once seriously consider, what wretched Circumstances many of the Landholders in Britain are at present in, we cannot surely make the least Hesitation in giving them Relief from the Oppressions they have so long groaned under, by laying on another Sort of Tax, which never was, nor ever can be felt by any Man breathing: A Tax which is so just that every Man contributes to it in Proportion to the Benefit he receives, instead of a Tax, by which a few are obliged to contribute the whole of the Charge, though they receive but a hundredth Part of the Benefit.

‘ We have likewise, Sir, been frightened with the Name of a General Excise, and with the Loss of our Liberties and Properties. As to the last, the Bugbear will vanish, if we but reflect upon the Great Men that were at the Helm of Affairs, when the Salt-Tax was first laid on. It was first laid on in the Reign of the late King William, the glorious Restorer of the Liberties and Properties of the Nation: In his Time it first had its Being, and was contrived and advised by a Sett of Ministers, who will for ever be respected for their great Wisdom, and whose Memories will for ever be sacred, for the great Attachment they always shewed to the Constitution and the Liberties of this Kingdom. As for a General Excise, I never heard of any such Design, I am sure no Man that I know had ever any such Thing in his Thoughts, nor can the Reviving of the Salt-Tax any way contribute to such a Design. I must say, that I think many of our Customs are heavy upon Trade, and very troublesome to our Merchants; and therefore, if some of the most grievous of them were turned into an Excise, it would be of great Advantage to the Nation, and might, I believe, be easily done, without endangering in the least our Constitution, or encroaching upon the Liberty or Property of the Subject: But as there is at present no such Proposal before this House, we have no Occasion to take such a Thing into our immediate Consideration.

Mr Walpole was replied to by Sir William Wyndham, as follows :

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Sir,

Sir W. Wyndham.

‘ I could not indeed but suspect from the Manner of introducing this Motion, that something very extraordinary was to follow. I find I am not disappointed, for in my Opinion it is one of the most extraordinary Motions, that ever was made in this House. Under the specious Pretence of giving an immediate Ease to the Landed Gentlemen, we are to revive a Tax, which will lie as heavy as the Land-Tax upon most of them, and which is not only destructive to the Trade, but inconsistent with the Liberties of this Nation. I agree most heartily with the Gentleman who made the Motion, That many of our Landed Gentlemen have been reduced to most miserable Circumstances, by the heavy Burthens they have borne for so many Years: But their Misery is not to be ascribed to the Land-Tax only, every one of our other Taxes contributes its Share, and no Tax contributed more to the general Misery of the whole Nation, as well as of the Landed Gentlemen, than this very Tax, which is now proposed to be revived. It is indeed become necessary to continue the Land-Tax upon the former Footing, or to impose some new Tax in room thereof; but from whence does this Necessity proceed? Why, from maintaining a greater Number of Land-Forces, and putting ourselves to much greater Charges, than we have in my Opinion any Occasion for. It has always been the Case, it always will be the Case, Sir, that one wrong Measure must for ever give Birth to another, that to a Third, and so on till Publick Ruin becomes inevitable, if no Redress be offered in Time; which never can be effectuated, but by altering the former wrong Measures, instead of supporting them by worse.

‘ I am sorry, Sir, to find that we are reduced to this Extremity, that we must either lay on a Land-Tax, which seems to be agreed by all to be heavier than the Landed Gentlemen of this Nation are able to bear, or otherways we must lay on a Tax, which in the Opinion of, I hope, the Majority of this House, is of much more fatal Consequence. How fatal, Sir, is this Necessity? Our Landed Gentlemen must be ruined, or the whole Nation must be undone! It is certain, Sir, that every Tax is an Evil, and an Evil that ought to be avoided, if possible; the corrupt Nature of Mankind has made some Taxes necessary for the Support of Society; and we find to our Cost, that Taxes, like other Evils, are fruitful in the Begetting of one another: But when we come to make a Choice between two Taxes, of the two Evils we certainly ought to chuse that which is least; and since we have by our former Resolutions made one of the Two, now under

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Consideration necessary, we ought now to examine strictly which of the two is the least Evil.

‘ I have, I hope, Sir, as deep a Sense of the Miseries and Sufferings of my Fellow-Countrymen as any Man in this House, and when I speak of charging Land in place of charging Salt, I am certain, and I believe every Man that knows me will think, that I speak against my own private Interest ; and therefore I flatter myself, that those who hear me will think I am sincere in what I say. It is very true, Sir, that the Reducing of the Land-Tax would be a great Relief to the Landed Gentlemen, if it could be done without taking as much from them in another Way. The Land-Tax is indeed a heavy Charge upon the Landholders of this Kingdom, but that is the only Evil attending it ; I cannot grant that it is so unequal as some Gentlemen have been pleased to represent ; every Man ought to pay to the Publick Charge in Proportion to the Benefit he receives therefrom ; a poor Man, who has no Property, ought not certainly to be charged for the Defence of Property ; he has nothing but his Liberty to contend for, and for the Defence of that only he ought in Justice to be charged ; whereas a Man, who has an Estate, has Property as well as Liberty to contend for, and for the Defence of both he ought to be charged. Liberty may be equally dear to every Man, but surely he that has the largest Property, ought to contribute most to the Publick Expence.

‘ The heavy Weight that lies upon the Landholders, is I say, Sir, the only Evil attending the Land-Tax ; but in considering the Evils that necessarily attend a Tax upon Salt, the Land-Tax will upon the Comparison be found to have many Advantages : One of the great Evils of a Salt-Tax, I may say the greatest, because it strikes at our Constitution, is the great Number of Officers which must be employed in collecting that small Branch of the Revenue. These Officers are all named by the Crown, and being spread all over the Country, must have a great Influence in Elections : This, Sir, throws a greater Power into the Hands of the Crown, than is in my Opinion consistent with the Liberties of this Nation. If it ever shall happen to be the Misfortune of this Nation, to have a Set of wicked Ministers in the Administration, and a weak or an ambitious Prince upon the Throne, the great Number of Officers, employed in collecting the Publick Revenue, must be of the most dangerous Consequence to the very Being of our happy Constitution ; and therefore we ought not, upon any Pretence whatsoever, to increase the Number of those Slaves of an Administration. As to this Evil, the Land-Tax has by much the Advantage of the Salt-Tax ; in the first there are few or no Officers employed ; but the last will make an Addition of six or seven

Hundred

Hundred to the Number of Officers we had before. This Tax upon Salt is likewise a dangerous Precedent ; it is one Step towards a General Excise ; from this, which is really an Excise upon Salt, we may come to have an Excise laid upon every Thing we can either eat or drink. It would be dangerous to begin to raise even the Taxes we now pay, by the method of Excise, both because it would be a bad Precedent, and because of the Uncertainty of the Produce : If the Raising them by Excise should produce less than they now do, they could not answer those Payments for which they are appointed ; and if it raised more, it might, considering the present Establishment of the Civil List, throw more Money into the Hands of the Crown, than would be consistent with the Freedom of the People.

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‘ Another Advantage which the Land-Tax has over the Tax now proposed, is, that the Raising of a Shilling in the Pound costs but a meer Trifle, and is subject to no Frauds. The whole, I may say, that is raised from the People, comes to the Use of the Publick, and to the Benefit of the People ; but the Case is quite different as to the Tax upon Salt ; it is impossible to raise the Salt-Duty without employing a great Number of Officers, they must all have Salaries, besides the Perquisites and Gratuities which always have been, and always will be given to Men in such Offices : The honest Part of Mankind can never get common Justice from them without paying the Perquisite, and the fraudulent Part of the Nation will always purchase their Connivance by large Gratuities ; thus a very large Sum will be raised upon the People, and but a small Part thereof will ever come to the Use of the Publick, or to the Benefit of the Nation. This was formerly the Case of this Duty upon Salt ; there was always a great Difference betwixt the Gross and Neat Produce thereof, and there never was any Tax in this Country that gave so much Occasion to Frauds and Perjuries ; the Tax is so much above the proper Price of the Commodity upon which it is raised, that it always was, and always must be a great Temptation for People to perjure themselves, and cheat the Publick.

‘ I am surprized, Sir, to hear any Gentleman doubt of this Duty upon Salt being heavy upon Trade, and prejudicial to the Manufactures of the Nation. It is so easy in this Case to come to particular Instances, that I defy any Man to name one Trade or Manufacture that it is not prejudicial to : Can any Man suppose it does not enhance the Price of all Provisions ? and by enhancing the Price of them it becomes a Charge upon every Manufacture in particular ; but upon our Navigation it is insupportable ; Every Ship that sails from this Kingdom must pay dearer for her Salt-Provisions, or must go to some other Place to take them in : Do not we know,

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Sir, that many of our Merchant-Ships, for these several Years last past, have gone to Ireland to take in the Salt-Provisions necessary for their intended Voyage? If this Tax had been discontinued for any Number of Years, they would probably have returned to victual in our own Ports, as they always did before the laying on of this Tax upon Salt. Even the short Time which it has been discontinued has shewn what a Disadvantage the reviving of it will be to the Improvement of Land. Since the Tax was taken off, several Experiments have been made for the Improvement of Land by the Means of Salt, and they have all answered to Admiration. The Revival of this Tax cannot therefore proceed from any Compassion for the Landed Gentlemen, since we thereby prevent the Improvement of their Lands; and a very small Improvement of the Rent of an Estate is worth a great deal more, than one Year's Land-Tax, at a Shilling in the Pound, will amount to even upon a very large Estate.

‘ But in the present Case, Sir, we not only prevent the Improvement of Land-Estates, but we really take as much from almost every Landed Gentleman in another way, as he saves by the Diminution of the Land-Tax; and at the same Time we take so much from every one of his Tenants, as to disable them, or some of them at least, from paying the same Rent they formerly paid. In all well-regulated Countries great Care is taken, that the poor Farmer shall not be overcharged. Where is there a more flourishing, or a better cultivated Spot of Ground in the World, than our neighbouring Country Flanders? Yet what Ravages, what Desolations has that poor Country suffered by contending Armies? What is this to be ascribed to? certainly to that wise Policy of the Landlords, established as a Law in that Country, that whenever any Farmer suffered any Loss in his Farm, by the Incampments or Depredations of an Army, he paid no Rent for that Year to his Landlord: By that he was enabled to support the Loss, and to repair the Damages for the Benefit of his Landlord as well as himself. Do we not see the Effects of a contrary Policy in Poland? There, the poor Tenants are racked and oppressed, and for that very reason one Half of that Country, which is naturally one of the most fertile in Europe, lies waste and uncultivated. This will always be the Consequence, when a Landlord charges his Tenant for the Sake of a small Ease to himself.

‘ We have already, Sir, so many Taxes, so many Impositions; the Price of every Thing is thereby so much enhanced, that none of our Manufactures can be sold in a Foreign Market so cheap as the same Sort of Manufactures are sold by our Neighbours. To this only the great Decay of our Trade is to be imputed; and if it had not been for some natural

tural Advantages, it would have been before now entirely lost and gone. It would have been happy for this Nation, if they had always raised the Supplies within the Year : We severely feel the Effects of this Error in Politicks committed by the Generation before us ; and yet shall we with our Eyes open go on in the same Track, and doubly load our Posterity for a small present Ease to ourselves ? We are told that this Tax is to continue but for three Years ; but I plainly see that it must be continued longer : By Computation it is allowed, that 500,000 l. may be raised by this Tax in the Space of two Years and a Half, from whence I foresee, that at the End of three Years we shall be told, that there being Half a Year good in Hand, the Continuing it but for two Years longer will raise such another Sum. I do not doubt, but that at the End of this three Years, we shall be under a much greater Necessity of raising such a Sum by extraordinary Means, than we are at present ; at the End of five Years it may be the same, and thus it may for ever continue.

Even the Landed Gentlemen, if they consider their own Interest, never will desire to be eased as to the Land-Tax, by laying on any other Tax instead thereof. In such a Case the Landed Gentlemen will always find, that what they save by this Ease as to the Land-Tax, is more than exhausted by what they pay out of their own Pockets, towards the Tax laid on in its room ; and at the same Time the poor Tenants and Farmers are oppressed, and the Trade of the Country undone. Let us but suppose, that the Sum of five Millions were to be raised, and this I believe is as large a Sum as the nett Produce of all our Taxes will amount to. If this Sum were to be all raised by a Land-Tax, it would amount to ten Shillings in the Pound : This indeed would be a most grievous Tax, but let any Gentleman compute what he now pays, under the present Method of Taxation, towards the Land-Tax, towards the Malt-Tax, towards the Window-Lights, and to the advanced Price of all the Necessaries and Conveniences of Life, which he either makes use of in his Family or is obliged to call and pay for when he is abroad ; and I believe he will find, that in the Year's Time it amounts to more than if he were to pay a Land-Tax of ten Shillings in the Pound, and at least to as much again upon the rest of the People. This, Sir, is the unavoidable Consequence of our present Method of Taxation. The Charge is so great, and the Advantages taken by the Merchant and Retailer are so extravagant, that one Half at least of what is raised upon the People never comes to the Use of the Publick ; and it is so far, Sir, from being laid out or expended for the Benefit of the People, that it may some time or another be turned towards the enslaving of them : From whence, Sir, I think it

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is as demonstrable as any Proposition in Euclid, that if we actually paid a Land-Tax of ten Shillings in the Pound, without paying any other Excises or Duties, our Liberties and our Properties would be much more secure, and every Landed Gentleman might live at least in as much Plenty, and might make a better Provision for his Family, than under our present Method of Taxation.

‘ I shall conclude, Sir, with observing that as this Tax falls most grievously upon the Poor, and as they are by far the Majority of the People, it must of consequence raise a general Murmuring and Discontent against the Administration : By this the Government, for their own Security, will be obliged to keep up a numerous Standing Army : This will be a new Ground of Complaint among the People ; and they will at last begin to think, that their Liberties and their Properties are really in Danger ; and I hope the People of this Nation will always have Courage enough to dispute so sacred, so valuable a Prize ; but cursed must they be whose Measures shall occasion such a Contest.

Mr Dundas.

Mr Dundas spoke next,

Sir,

We have heard a great deal of the Inequality of the Land-Tax, and great Complaints that, notwithstanding its being raised for the Good of all, yet there were but a small Part of the Nation that contributed any Thing thereto : I grant, Sir, that it is so far unequal ; but then as no Man contributes but he that has an Estate, it cannot be said that it is insupportable to any Man ; and it must be allowed, that the Rest of the Nation are quite free from that Burthen : But this Tax upon Salt is as unequal as the other, for there are a great many Gentlemen in this Nation, the greatest Part of whose Estates consists in Salt-Works, and by this Tax there will be at least one sixth Part, I may say one fourth Part, of these Estates taken from them. The Inequality therefore is as great with respect to this Tax, as with respect to that upon Land ; but no Man, no Person in the Nation can be free from this Tax upon Salt, it must be burthensome upon all, and insupportable to a great many. I have the less Reason to be against the reviving of this Tax, because, by the Articles of the Union, that Part of the Country which I come from is to be free therefrom, or at least from the greatest Part thereof : Nor can I think that the taking off of a Tax, for one Year, which Scotland is by the Articles of the Union to be free from, and laying it on the very next Year, will ever afford a Pretence for the charging of the People of Scotland with the Payment of such a Tax ; for then it would be easy to subject them to all those Taxes and Duties, which they are declared free from by the Articles

cles of the Union. This, Sir, is my Opinion, but I shall be very sorry ever to see any Thing brought into this House, that may possibly bring any one of the Articles of Union into Question, or so much as raise a Doubt about the Meaning and Intention of any one of them: Explanations in that Affair will always be dangerous, and every Man who wishes well, either to his King or his Country, will endeavour as much as he can to avoid coming to any such. If there were no other Reason, Sir, for my being against this Duty upon Salt, this one is enough to me, that there appear to be several Gentlemen in this House, who are of different Sentiments from me, with respect to the Meaning and Intention of that Article of the Union, by which Scotland is declared free from the Duties then payable upon Salt. I hope all the Gentlemen of my own Country, at least, are in this Point of the same Sentiments with me, and consequently as they have very little to do in the present Question, I hope they will at least withdraw, and not join in laying a Tax upon their Neighbours, which their own Country is not to bear an equal Share in.

‘ It is well known how many Frauds and Perjuries were committed, during the Time that there was a Duty upon foreign Salt, and Drawbacks allow’d upon the Exportation of Fish cured therewith. How many Ships were sent out with Fish, pretended to be so cured, which never carried any to a Foreign Market? Do not we know, that some Ships have been enter’d, or at least pretended to have been enter’d, and the Drawbacks for the Cargoes of such pretended Ships have been not only allow’d, but paid, and yet it was afterwards discover’d, that no such Ship was ever built? One Gentleman was obliged to fly his Country for such Practices: ’Tis true that he afterwards got a Pardon, and soon after, a Commission in the Customs: How he came to deserve such Favour and such Preferment is more than I can tell; but I am sure no Man ever was, or will be deterred from being guilty of such Crimes, by the Severity of the Punishment he met with. The Multitude of those Frauds committed by the Exporters, or pretended Exporters of Fish cured with foreign Salt, was so great, that the Government was obliged at last to take the Duty entirely off of foreign Salt; and every Man was allowed to import Duty-free, as much as was necessary for curing all the Fish he exported to any foreign Market; and what was the Consequence? why, under this Pretence of curing Fish for a foreign Market, a great deal of foreign Salt was imported publicly, and afterwards privately sold about the Country for all the Uses in Life; and it is well known, the Proprietors of Salt-Works know it to their Cost, that while the Duty continued upon home-made Salt,

there

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there was none of it ever made use of in many Parts of this Island. If this Tax be revived, the same Frauds will be renew'd; and Frauds there will be, put it in what Shape you will: If you revive the Duty on foreign Salt, there will then be Frauds as to the Drawbacks; if you revive the Duty on home-made Salt, without laying a Duty on the Importation of foreign Salt, then in several Places of the Country they will fall upon some fraudulent Way or other of getting foreign Salt for all Uses; whereby you will increase the national Expence, and in a little Time destroy most of your own Salt-Works.

‘ The Independency of this House has of late Years been much talk’d of; I hope it will always be independent: But I must say, Sir, that if a Scheme had been laid down for making this House dependent upon the Crown, a more easy, a more effectual, a more certain Method could not have been contriv’d for the Success of such a wicked Scheme, than this of reviving the Salt-Duty. By this Duty there is so large a Sum yearly rais’d, and so little brought to the publick Account, that it may really be most properly called a Bribing us with our own Money. I am sure his Majesty never can think of such a Scheme; he has the Interest of the Nation and the Benefit of Mankind too much at Heart, to let any such Schemes ever enter into his Thoughts; but every Man is sensible, that a great Number of Officers, all named by the Crown, and removeable at the Pleasure of the King, or of those in the Administration, may have, if so apply’d, an Influence upon the Elections for Members of Parliament; and considering the Time that this Duty is now laid on, that it is laid on for three Years only, and that within that Time there is to be, as it is hop’d, a new Choice of Representatives, one who does not know his Majesty’s good and just Intentions will be apt to suspect, that the laying on of such a Tax at such a critical Juncture, is with Design to influence the approaching Elections. I shall always be against any Measure that may give the meanest of his Majesty’s Subjects the least Cause to suspect, that his Majesty ever had a Design of making use of any such Influence. I am convinced, he has no such Design; I firmly believe he never will form any such Design; but as much the greatest Part of the People live remote from Court, and have no Opportunity of knowing his Majesty’s real Intentions, they may put wrong Constructions upon Things; and therefore no Man, who is a sincere Lover of the present happy Establishment, ought to agree to any Measure, which is in its own Nature liable to be misapprehended, and apt to raise Jealousies and Fears among his Majesty’s faithful Subjects.’

Mr Dundas having done speaking, Sir Robert Walpole spoke again :

Sir,

‘ Though I had examin’d this Affair with the utmost Accuracy I was capable of : Though I was convinced that what I was to propose, was for the publick Good, and for the Relief of those who have been long oppressed ; yet I expected that the Motion I was to make, would meet with Opposition, either from those who have not so thoroughly consider’d this Matter, or from those whose particular Interest or private Views lead them to be against it. However, this Difficulty and Trouble which I foresaw I was to encounter, did not, nor ever shall deter me from offering to this House what I take to be for the Good of my Country, and for the Relief of those in Distress. All publick Assemblies must for ever be composed of Persons, who have different Ways of Thinking, different Interests, and different Ends. Every Tax that can be proposed will be objected to by some of those who are to pay it ; and the most unequal Tax will be approved of, and preferred to the most equal, by those who are to contribute nothing, or a very little thereto. The Journals of this House may afford us many Examples of Petitions presented, and a vigorous Opposition made, against Things that have in their own Nature appeared to be an universal Benefit to Mankind. Those who live by the Necessities of Mankind, will for ever oppose what is proposed for their Relief ; from hence it is, that we always see great Opposition made to all Attempts for improving the Navigation of Rivers, or of waste Lands and Commons ; we are therefore, Sir, never to conclude against the publick Benefit of any Proposition, because we see it violently opposed.

‘ Envy and Malice will often prompt Men to oppose what is apparently for their own immediate Benefit, as well as for the Benefit of their Country. Every Man, I believe, even in a private Station of Life, has Enemies ; but those who are in any publick Station have always a great many. Those who envy them, will always grudge them the Glory of doing any thing for the publick Good, and will endeavour to defeat, or to give a wrong Turn to whatever they propose for the Benefit of their Country, or for the Ease of the People. I do not believe that any Gentleman in this House opposes what I have moved for from any such Motives. I am persuaded that the Opposition made thereto proceeds entirely from their mistaking the Case before us, and therefore I shall endeavour as much as I can, to remove those Mistakes, and shall think the Pains I am at well bestow’d, if I can there-

Anno 5. Geo. W.
1731-32.

Sir R. Walpole.

Ann. 5. Geo. II.
1731-32.

by convince any one Gentleman of this House of the Error he has been in.

‘ The Influence to be added to the Power of the Crown, by the Addition of such a Number of Officers, as must be employ’d in the collecting of this Revenue, is, I find, a mighty Objection against the reviving of this Duty upon Salt. I am sorry, Sir, to find that any Gentleman should think so meanly of his Native Country. Our Liberties and our Properties would indeed be in the most imminent Danger, if an Addition of 4 or 500 Officers could add such a terrible Influence to the Power of the Crown. But, Sir, we have the Experience of above 30 Years, to convince us of the Unreasonableness of such Apprehensions; and during a great Part of this Time, the Crown had, besides this Number of Salt-Officers, a much more numerous Army than it has at present; consequently the Power of the Crown must have been much greater than it can be made by what is now proposed, and yet it was never found to be too great; but on the contrary, the Crown was always obliged to sue for, and to submit to the Inclinations of the People. While the Power of the Crown is properly apply’d, and made Use of only to defend the Liberties and Properties of the Subject, the Crown will always have the Inclinations of the Majority of the People in its Favour. This is the natural and just Influence which the Crown ought to have, and I hope it will never have any other in this Kingdom. We know that the Factious and Disaffected have always exclaimed against the Number of Officers, and have alledged that the Disappointments they met with, in their Opposition to the most just and most reasonable Measures proposed by the Court, proceeded from the Influence of such Officers; but it is evident, that the People of this Nation never could be brought by such Influence, to do any thing that was inconsistent with their Liberties and Privileges: And as there is no greater Number of Officers now proposed, than what was before employ’d when this Duty was subsisting, it cannot be presumed, that this Influence will now be greater than it has been in Times past. Do not therefore let imaginary Fears and vain Apprehensions deter us from giving a Relief to the most distressed Part of our Fellow-Subjects.

‘ Another Bugbear raised against this Duty on Salt is, that it is a Sort of Excise, and may be a Precedent for introducing a General Excise. I am persuaded that no Man ever thought of introducing a General Excise into this Country; I can answer for myself that I never did; but because there is such a Term as a General Excise, because there may be such a Thing in some Countries, shall we therefore admit of

no particular Excise, nor any Duty upon any particular Commodity? We may as well say we will pay no Tax, because in some Countries that have the Misfortune to be subject to arbitrary Power, they are oppressed with Taxes. An Excise is only a Word for a Tax raised in a different Manner; and if it be found by Experience, that our present Method of raising our Taxes is more burthensome upon our Trade, and more inconvenient and expensive to the Merchant, than the raising them by way of Excise would be, I see no manner of Reason why we should be frighten'd by these two Words, *General Excise*, from changing the Method of raising the Taxes we now pay, and choosing that Method which is most convenient for the trading Part of the Nation. The laying of an Excise upon one Commodity, or upon one Sort of Provisions, can no more be a Precedent for a General Excise, than my giving a poor Man half a Crown, can be a Precedent for my giving him my whole Estate. We find that the Method of raising Taxes by way of Excise, is not absolutely inconsistent with Liberty; we find it is the Method by which most of the Taxes are raised in Holland; and their Method is reckon'd much more preferable to ours, by all those who understand any Thing of Trade; yet no Man can say but that the Dutch are a free People, and are as jealous of their Liberties as any People ought in Reason to be.

Anno 5. Geo. II.

1731-32.

' There are at present no Thoughts of converting any Duty into an Excise; but if all or most Part of our Customs were converted into Excises, I am persuaded it would be beneficial to our Commerce in general, and there is no great Fear of its adding so much to the Civil List; for notwithstanding the great Clamours that have been raised upon that Head, it appears, that from his Majesty's Accession, to the Year 1731, even including the Sum of 115,000*l.* granted by Parliament to make up the Deficiency of the Civil-List Revenue, [See p. 48.] the Produce of all those Duties appropriated to the Civil-List, has not in the whole amounted to 800,000*l. per Annum* which is the Sum that has been judged by Parliament to be necessary for supporting the Charge of his Majesty's Civil-List; so that if by the Method of Excise these Duties should produce a little more, and it is not to be presumed that they can produce a great deal more, they will only make up that Sum which the Parliament have thought themselves obliged in Justice to make good to his Majesty.

' I must, say, Sir, I am surprized at the Proposal that has been made for laying this whole Tax upon Salt made in Scotland; I am persuaded the Gentlemen are not serious in what they proposed; I reckon it was made only to divert

the Principal Question, and to oblige the Gentlemen of that Country to be against it, not because they disapprove of it in the main, but for fear their Country should be, by an After-Resolution, charged with a Duty which, by the Articles of the Union, they are declared free from for ever. The Salt-Duty, now proposed to be revived, was granted at two several Times; one was for but 1 s. *per* Bushel, the other was for 2 s. 4 d. *per* Bushel. At the Time of making the Union, the Scots Commissioners were willing that their Country should after a certain Term of Years be subject to the 1 s. *per* Bushel; but they declared that their People could not possibly afford to pay the additional 2 s. and 4 d.; and therefore they insisted upon their being free from it for ever, which on our Side was agreed to. The Act of the 9th and 10th of King William had imposed this Duty of 2 s. and 4 d. for ever, and therefore that Article of the Union relating to this Duty upon Salt was drawn up in these Terms: ‘ That the
 ‘ Scots should be exempted, for seven Years, from all Duties
 ‘ whatever on home-made Salt, after which they were to pay
 ‘ the Duties levied in England, with this Exception, and in
 ‘ these express Words, “ That Scotland shall, after the said
 “ seven Years, remain exempted from the Duty of 2 s. 4 d.
 “ imposed on home-made Salt, by an Act made in England in
 “ the 9th and 10th Years of King William III. of England.”
 Can there be any thing more express than this? By the Act therein mentioned, the Duty was expressly to continue to be levied in England for ever. Is it not therefore evident, that by the Article of Union referring to that Act, the Scots are for ever to be free from that Duty? Shall we be so unjust, shall we be so ungenerous, as to make use of a down-right Quirk in Law to subject those People to a Duty, which by the Agreement between us, they are for ever to be free from? This was the express Stipulation between the two Nations at the Time the Union was made. How captious then must it be to say, that the Exemption can only bear a Relation to the Duty imposed by that Act, and cannot be claimed with respect to the same Duty now to be imposed by a new Act? If such a Pretence were to be admitted, if taking off any Duty imposed by former Acts, under which the People of Scotland were intitled to an Exemption, and laying on the same Duty again by a new Act, were admitted of as an Avoidance of their Claim of Exemption, of what Force can any such Article of Agreement be? Have we it not in our Power at this rate to defeat every Exemption, which the Scots are intitled to by the Union? For it is but repealing that Act under which they claim an Exemption, and then in a Year or two afterwards imposing the same Duty by a new Act. Thus the Scots might be at once subjected to those
 Duties

Duties which they are not able, which they ought not to bear. But would it be fair, would it be candid in us to make use of such a Subterfuge, against a Nation that has trusted so much to our Honour ?

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‘ This Tax cannot therefore be said to be unequal, because Scotland does not pay as much as is paid in England. The People in that Country are to pay as much as they ought to pay, and as much as we can in Justice or Equity demand ; nor does it signify whether the Share they pay be sent up here or not : They have an equal Right to be protected and defended ; the protecting and defending the People of that Country is a Part of the Publick Charge : It is a Part of the National Expence, and must be defrayed out of the Publick Revenue ; and the applying the Money raised in that Country, towards the publick Expence in that Country, is the same as if it were sent up to the Exchequer here. We ought to be the more careful of that Part of the Island, because we have found by Experience, that there can be no Invasion upon, nor any Commotion among the People in that Country, but what must soon come to affect ourselves. For our own Safety then we are obliged to be at the Charge of defending them, and consequently it can be no Objection against any Tax, that the Produce thereof arising in Scotland is applied to the answering of such a Purpose. Nor is this Tax unequal, because of the Loss that the Proprietors of Salt-Works may sustain, for none of their Estates can be thereby diminished. The Tax is not paid by the Maker, or by the Seller, but by the Consumer ; and the Charge comes to such a Trifle upon every particular Man, that it cannot be pretended that any Man will consume less Salt than he did before ; if there were no such Tax, no Man would make use of more Salt than he had occasion for, and the Tax makes so small an additional Charge, that it will never oblige any Man to make use of less.

‘ The great Charge of raising this Tax, has been made use of as a weighty Argument against it ; but when we come to make a Comparison between this and the Land-Tax, the Difference will be found to be but inconsiderable. If proper Allowances are made, it will be found that the raising of this Tax upon Salt will not cost the Government above 22,000 l. *per Annum*. The Land Tax we know costs the Publick, by Parliamentary Allowance and other necessary Charges of Management, at least 13,500 l. *per Annum* ; besides this, there is an Office kept in Commission on purpose for superintending it, which costs above 4000 l. *per Annum* more ; so that the Land-Tax really costs the Publick about 18,000 l. *per Annum*. Thus the Difference between the Charge of raising

raising the Salt Tax, and that of raising the Land-Tax appears at last to be but 4000*l. per Annum*, which is not Half a Farthing in a Year to every Person that is to contribute thereunto. Shall we then for the Sake of saving this 4000*l.* a Year to this Nation in general, or this Half-Farthing to every particular Person ; shall we, I say, for this Reason continue to oppress the Landed Gentlemen, contrary to all Equity and Justice, and refuse to approve of a Measure by which they are to be relieved, without throwing any sensible Charge upon any one Man in the Nation ? If the Difference were much higher than what it is, is it not with respect to the Nation in general amply repaid by this, that in continuing the Land-Tax at Two Shillings in the Pound, the Nation is obliged to raise the whole Sum wanted within one Year ? whereas if the Land-Tax is put at One Shilling in the Pound, and the Salt-Tax laid on instead of the other Shilling, the Nation has three Years to raise that Sum, which otherways is to be raised in one. Every Man in common Life, would rather chuse to have three Years for the Payment of a Debt, than to be obliged to pay it in one : Every Man would be glad to pay something for such an Indulgence, and a great deal more in Proportion, than the Difference of the Charge in raising those two Taxes can ever amount to.

‘ The great Difference, that always appeared between the gross and nett Produce of this Duty, has been made use of as an Argument to shew the great Charge of collecting this Revenue, and to convince us that there was always a great deal more raised from the People, than ever came to the Benefit of the Publick ; but this Argument will quite vanish when the Matter is set in a clear Light ; it will then appear, that those Gentlemen are in a very great Mistake : They have always called that the gross Produce, which never was any thing but the gross Charge ; these are two Things of a very different Nature, and therefore they never ought to be confounded by those, who have a mind to form a right Judgment about any Branch of the Revenue. We know that while this Duty was subsisting, the gross Charge was generally reckoned, *Communibus Annis*, at about 470,000*l. per Annum*, but then there were a great many Articles charged to this Branch, which never were really produced or paid to it, and consequently they never can be reckoned any Part of its gross Produce. I shall take Notice of the most considerable of those Articles, which were charged and brought to the general Account of this Branch, without ever being produced or paid by any one Person, and therefore it is certain that they never could be looked on as a Charge or Burthen upon the Subjects of this Nation.

‘ In former Times, while this Duty was subsisting, we know that all Salt was charged with Duties when sold and delivered from the Works, and consequently from that Instant it became an Article of the gross Charge of this Revenue ; but then whatever Salt was bought by any Person who had a mind to export the same, he paid no Money for the Duties then charged upon the Salt he had bought, but entered into a Bond to pay the Duty, which Bond was cancelled upon a Debenture made out, certifying the Salt to have been exported. From hence it appears, that for all the Salt that ever was exported, there never was One Farthing of Money actually paid by the Subject ; and by the Books it appears, that this one Article alone at a Medium, amounted to 120,000 l. *per Annum*. As no Part of this Sum was ever produced or paid by any Person, therefore it cannot be reckoned as a Part of the gross Produce, though it was always reckoned as a Part of the gross Charge.

‘ Another considerable Article arose from what was allowed for the Fishery ; for Curers of Fish paid no Duty, neither did they give Bonds for what Salt they used in curing of Fish ; but the Quantities, which they took up for that purpose, were all entered in the Accounts of the Office, as a Part of the gross Charge of this Duty, and were all discharged upon due Proof given, that the Salt had been used in curing of Fish ; and this Article amounted at a Medium to 51,000 l. *per Annum*, which is likewise to be deducted from the gross Charge.

‘ Rock-Salt was charged with the Duty at the Pits, and a great deal of this Rock-Salt was afterwards melted down, and made into White Salt, which was also charged with the Duty, and both these Duties were charged in the Accounts of the Office ; but the Refiner or Maker had an Allowance for so many Bushels of Rock-Salt, for which the Duty had been charged, as he had melted down and made use of in making White Salt. This Article generally amounted to about 36,000 l. *per Annum*, and is to be deducted from the gross Charge.

‘ It is well known that the whole Sums, payable for Duties, were always charged in the Books of the Office ; and yet there was always a Discount for Prompt-Payment allowed, which amounted to about 20,000 l. yearly ; and besides this, there was another Allowance for Waite on Salt carried Coastwise, which one Year with another came to 11,000 l. *per Annum*. There was likewise an Allowance for Salt lost at Sea, and an Allowance or a Drawback upon Salt-Beef and Pork exported, both which amounted to 1650 l. *per Annum*. All these Sums added together amounted to 239,650 l. and as they never were raised upon the Subject, or if raised were
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always returned, therefore they must all be deducted from the Gross Charge, and the remaining Sum only, being 230,350 l. is to be reckoned the Gross Produce. From which if we deduct the Charges of Management, viz. 25,000 l. there remains 205,350 l. which is the Nett Produce. And if from this we deduct the Bounties paid annually to the Exporters of Fish, and which must be paid whether we revive this Tax or not, these Bounties amounting yearly to the Sum of 19,000 l. the remaining Sum will then be the Nett Sum to be paid into the Exchequer, viz. 186,350 l. on the Credit of which 500,000 l. is now proposed to be raised.

‘ By this short Abstract of the Account, it will, I think, Sir, most evidently appear, that there is nothing in that Argument so much insisted on, that there is a great deal more raised upon the People than ever can come to the Benefit of the Publick. There is no evading of Facts, and upon the most exact Examination of them it appears, that every Shilling that is actually raised from the People, comes to the Use of the Publick, except this Sum of 25,000 l. *per Annum*, allowed for the Management of this Revenue. And even this 25,000 l. is all to be given to our own People; many Families may be thereby maintained who would otherwise be a Burthen upon their Country; and thus the greatest Part even of that Sum will come to be useful to the Nation in general, and may therefore be properly said to come to the Benefit of the Publick.

‘ Great Complaints have been made, and a great Clamour raised, that this Tax will always give great Occasion to Frauds and Perjuries. I am persuaded, Sir, that no Excise whatever is attended with fewer Frauds in the Management than this Tax now under our Consideration. What is generally presumed to give Occasion to Frauds and Perjuries in all Methods of Taxation, is, when great Sums of Money are to be paid by the Subject, and returned to them again upon certain Events. Let any Man but examine the Articles of the Gross Charge of this Revenue, he will find, that there is no Money paid and returned. In all those Articles by which the Gross Amount is made to exceed the Gross Produce, the Accounts of the Office are carried on by way of Debtor and Creditor; there is hardly ever any Money paid by the Subject, that is to be returned either to him or to any other upon any Event whatsoever; we must therefore conclude, that in the Method by which this Tax was formerly, and is now again proposed to be raised, there can be nothing to tempt the Avarice, or to encourage the Frauds of Knavish Dealers.

‘ I shall now, Sir, examine some of those particular Objections that have been made to this Tax. The only one that I think has any Appearance of Reason in it, is, That
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with respect to the Navigation of Great Britain, it is pretended that it will be a great Burthen upon the victualling of our Ships : But unluckily it happens, that the Navigation of Great Britain never flourished more than it did under the Payment of this Tax. In a Course of Five and Thirty Years that this Tax continued, it cannot be said, that ever our Shipping or our Navigation suffered in the least ; on the contrary, there is not, I believe, any such Term in all our History, in which the Number of our Seamen, and the Number and Tonnage of our Ships encreased so much as it did in that Time. This is of itself a clear Proof that this Tax can be no Discouragement to our Navigation. But in Fact it is plain, that the additional Expence occasioned by this Duty is such a meer Trifle, that it never can be any Burthen ; by Accounts from the Victualling-Office it appears, that the Charge for 10,000 Men in the Service of his Majesty's Navy, was at a Medium but 2,600 l. *per Annum* extraordinary Expence, occasioned by the Duty on Salt, which is no more than five Shillings per Man ; so that if we reckon 30,000 Men employed in the Navigation carried on by the Merchants of Great Britain, the Duty on the whole Consumption of Salt in that Service will not exceed 7,800 l. *per Annum*, and surely no Man will imagine this to be a grievous and an insupportable Load upon the whole Navigation of Great Britain. But those that know any Thing of the Merchant Service can testify, that Salt-Provisions are not the only Victualling made use of in that Service. Their Ships are often in some Port or another, and then the Sailors live mostly upon fresh Provisions ; even when they are at Sea, it is well known that the greatest Part of their Food consists of dried Fish, fresh Fish caught at Sea, Flower, Rice, and other such Provisions. Aboard of Merchant Ships they never consume near so much Salt-Provisions, in proportion to the Number of their Hands, as they do aboard any of his Majesty's Ships of War. And our Merchant-Ships which trade to Ireland or to the Plantations, generally take in their Salt-Provisions in one of those two Places, because of the Cheapness of Meat in those Countries ; so that the Expence brought upon our Navigation by this Tax, especially in the Merchant Service, will at last be reduced to such a Trifle, that it will become altogether insensible. And as to the Exportation of Salt-Provisions this Duty can never be any Discouragement to such a Trade, because the Exporters are allowed a Drawback in Lieu of the Duty they have paid.

‘ If Salt be of so great a Benefit as has been represented in the Manuring of Lands, it is certain that foul Salt may do as well for that Purpose as any other Salt whatever, and any Quantity of such Salt may be had gratis for carrying

it off from the Pits; no Duty was ever paid or charged for such Salt; the Person who took it away to manure his Land, having an Officer with him, was always intitled to use it Duty free; if the Tax be revived it will still be the same, and consequently the Duty can never be a Hindrance to the Improvement of our Lands, since the only Salt that is proper for that Purpose is always to be had Duty-free. And as to the Farmers and Graziers of Great Britain, this Duty can never be any great Charge upon them; whatever Salt they use in making up any Goods for the Market, is paid for at the Market by the Buyer, and so comes at last to fall where all Duties ought to fall, upon the Consumer. In their own Families there is but very little Salt consumed, and therefore the Duty cannot fall heavily upon them. If upon Computation it be found, that the Duty costs but Five Shillings a Head at Sea, it cannot cost above half that Sum at Land, even if we were to suppose that there are as much Salt-Provisions made Use of at Land as at Sea; because we know that there is not half the Quantity of Salt made use of in curing Provisions for the Land, as in curing Provisions for the Sea-Service: But we know that for more than half the Year, the Country People live entirely upon the Produce of the Dairy and the Garden, and even for the other Half of the Year, they live more upon Cabbage, Roots, and such Things, than upon Salt Meat, consequently we cannot reckon that this Duty will stand the Farmer in above one Shilling a Head for those Persons that live in his Family. It is indeed impossible that it can cost so much; we may modestly reckon that the whole People of England amount to at least Eight Millions of Persons; every one of whom contributes his Share to this Duty; if then, Sir, the Sum raised which is 230,350 l. be distributed among Eight Millions of Persons, it will not amount to 7 d. a Man; and if from thence we deduct the 19,000 l. which the People of England are obliged to pay, whether this Tax be revived or not, we must conclude that no Person in England contributes more than 6 d. thereto, for his own personal Consumption. He that keeps a great many Persons in his Family, must indeed pay for each of them, but whoever does so must either have a good Estate or a good Trade, and consequently may very well afford to pay; and this, Sir, is the Excellency of the Salt-Tax, that every Man is thereby obliged to contribute to the Publick Charge, according to his Condition in Life. For I think no Man will say but that he who has a good Trade, or a great deal of Money out at Interest, ought to contribute as much to the Defence of Property, as he that has a Land-Estate that brings in no greater Yearly Revenue.

‘ I hope, Sir, I have now made it appear to the Con-
viction

viction of every Man that hears me, that the Salt-Duty is no Burthen upon the People of England, or upon any Part of them ; that it can be no Hindrance to the Improvement of our Land Estates, nor any Prejudice to our Trade or Navigation ; and it is, I may say, self-evident, that it is a more just, a more equal, and a better proportioned Tax, than any that is raised, or can be contrived to be raised upon the People of this Nation. The Land-Tax upon the other hand is the most unequal, the most grievous, and the most oppressive Tax that ever was raised in this Country ; it is a Tax which never ought to be raised but in Times of the most extreme Necessity. The best Judges, the truest Patriots in all Countries, have been of Opinion, that of all Taxes, that upon immoveable Goods, that upon Lands and Houses ought to be the last Resource. In such a Case there are but few of the People that contribute to the Publick Expence, and even among those few there will always be a great Partiality as to the Value that is put upon Men Estates. This we are very sensible of in England ; there are some Landed Gentlemen that pay a Land-Tax equal to the full Value of their Estates, while others do not pay equal to a third Part of the real Value ; and generally those Gentlemen, who suffer most by this Partiality, are those whose Ancestors were a Sort of Knight-Errants for the Revolution. They gloried in that happy Event, they thought themselves, in Honour and Justice, obliged to pay their equal Share for the Support of so glorious a Cause, in proportion to the real Value of the Estates they possessed ; and therefore they gave them in at the full Value. This was Justice, this was a laudable Zeal for the Happiness of the Nation, and for the Liberties and Privileges of the People ; but their Posterity suffer'd severely for it ; and as they always will be the greatest Sufferers by every Land-Tax, ought not the Merit and the honest Zeal of their Forefathers to plead strongly for their Relief, at least with all those who are Friends to our present happy Establishment ?

' To pretend, Sir, that the taking off a Shilling in the Pound of the Land-Tax, and raising the Salt-Tax in the room thereof, will be no Ease to most, or to any of the Landed Gentlemen in England, appears to me to be really a Sort of Paradox. I believe there are few Landed Gentlemen in England, whose Estates do not amount to 100 l. *per Annum* ; I am sure that the Landed Gentlemen of such Estates, or of any Land Estate from 100 l. to 1000 l. *per Annum*, are the greatest Objects of Compassion, and deserve most the Consideration of this House ; because those, who have less than 100 l. a Year in Land, are generally either Farmers or Grasers, or have some other Business as a Help for the Support of their Families. A Gentleman then of

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100 l. a Year in Land, if his Estate be rated at the full Value, saves 5 l. a Year by the Abatement of 1 s. in the Land-Tax : Let us see if it be possible that this can again be drawn from him by the Salt-Duty. I believe it will easily be granted me, that no Man, of 100 l. a Year and no more, Land-Estate, without any other Business keeps Sixteen in Family ; but supposing he does, yet at 6 d. a Head the Salt-Duty cannot amount to more in the whole three Years than 24 s. How then is it possible to pretend that this is not a Relief to such a Gentleman ? To pay but 24 s. in three Years, and at a thousand, I may say, different Payments, is surely better, and much less grievous, than to be obliged to pay 5 l. in one Year, and at most at two Payments. But suppose that such a Man's Estate is rated at the lowest Value, that any Lands in England are presumed to be rated at ; suppose such an Estate to be rated but at one third of the full Value, yet still by an Abatement of 1 s. in the Pound Land-Tax, he saves above 33 s. and therefore such an Abatement must be a Relief even to such a Man, of at least 9 s. besides the Advantage he has of having a much longer Time to pay a less Sum. Thus we see that what is now proposed must be a very great Relief to those, who are oppressed with Mortgages and Rent-Charges, and must be some Relief to every Landed Gentleman in the Kingdom, who has nothing but the Rents of his Estate to depend upon, for the Support of his Family, and providing for his Children.

' If there were any Danger, Sir, that the reviving of this Tax would occasion Murmurings among the People, I should be as much against it as any Man in this House ; but the Tax is in its own Nature so equal, and paid by such a vast Multitude of People, and at so many different Payments, that it becomes quite insensible to every particular Man. We know by Experience, that during the long Time it was paid by the People, it never occasioned the least Uneasiness, and we find that the Remission of it gave no Ease ; it occasioned no Joy among the People, nor were there any good Effects of it felt, either as to the lowering the Price of Goods or Provisions at Market, as to the raising the Value of Lands, or as to the reducing the Wages commonly given to Journey-men and Day-Labourers. Those therefore who have a Regard to the Interest of his Majesty, or to the Ease and Quiet of the Kingdom, cannot make the least Scruple in preferring a Tax that is felt by no Man, to a Tax that is insupportable to a great many of those that are obliged to contribute thereto. Such a Measure can breed no new Enemies to our present happy Establishment, but must convert a great many of the old, and insure the Affections of the most considerable Part of his Majesty's Subjects.

‘ In this, Sir, as well as in all the other Motions, which I have ever had the Honour to make to this House, I have always acted according to my own Judgment for the Good of my Country, and therefore, Sir, I have no Reason to be afraid of the Curses and Imprecations of any Man. I do not think it altogether Parliamentary to use any such Expressions in this House; every Man ought in common Charity to be presumed to act according to what he thinks best, and most conducive to the Interest and Happiness of his Country. I have always done so, and while I continue to do so, I shall despise any Outcries that may be groundlessly raised against me, or against any Measure I propose.

‘ To conclude, Sir, the only Thing I had in View was, to propose what I thought the most easy and the most convenient Method of relieving the Landed-Gentlemen, in Part at least of that Tax which has so long lain heavy upon them, and upon them only; I am convinced that every Gentleman in this House will agree with me in this, that a Land-Tax, even of two Shillings in the Pound is a most grievous Tax upon all the Landed-Gentlemen in the Kingdom, more especially upon those, whose Estates are charged with heavy Mortgages or large Annuities; and I think I have clearly shewn, that the Duty upon Salt is no way inconsistent with our Constitution, is no way burthensome either upon our Navigation or our Trade, and I am sure it cannot with any Appearance of Reason be said to be grievous upon any particular Man, or upon any Set of Men within the Dominions of Great-Britain. Let us then, for God’s Sake, Gentlemen, have some Consideration for the Freeholders, who have suffered so much for many Years; let us have some Compassion for those Gentlemen, whose Estates are deeply charged with Mortgages and Annuities, occasioned by the heavy Land-Taxes which their Forefathers have been obliged to pay. It is but reasonable that the Creditor should contribute to the publick Expence as well as his Debtor; and the most proper Method for effectuating so just a Design is, in my Opinion, the reviving the Duty upon Salt. If any Gentleman can propose a better, I shall most heartily join with him, and whoever thinks he cannot, will, I hope, agree to what I have proposed.’

Then Mr Pulteney replied as follows:

Sir,

‘ From what his Majesty was graciously pleased to tell us from the Throne at the Beginning of this Session, I did indeed expect, I believe the whole People of England with me did expect, that we were to receive some Ease as to our Taxes; some real, some effectual Ease was expected, and was with Reason expected. How are these Expectations of
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the poor People to be answer'd? By the Proposition now made, a Part, by much the greatest Part of them, are to be subjected to a new Tax, and the remaining Part are to be indeed free of a Part of an old Tax, but instead thereof they are to pay a new Tax, which will be equally grievous to most of them, at the same Time that it is grievous to every other Person in the Nation. This, Sir, is the Relief that the People of England are, by the Proposition now made, to meet with from the Establishment of a profound Tranquility both Abroad and at Home.

‘ Every Gentleman in this House must remember, how this Tax upon Salt came to be taken off. Only two Years ago his Majesty was pleased to open the Session with a most gracious Speech, in which he expressed a compassionate Concern for the Hardships of the poor Artificers and Manufacturers; from whence we must conclude, that his Majesty’s Opinion then was, that that Sort of People laboured under the greatest Hardships, and were the first who ought to be relieved. The Circumstances of the Nation are not much altered since that Time; the Landed Gentlemen are not, I hope, grown very much poorer, or less able to bear Burthens; the poor Artificers and Manufacturers, are not, I am sure, grown richer; and therefore I must think, that his Majesty has not alter’d his Opinion, whatever some Gentlemen in this House may have done: It is certain some of them have, because at that Time there was not so much as one Man in this House, that differed in Opinion from his Majesty. Every Man agreed that the poor Artificers and Manufacturers were the first, who ought to meet with Relief from the happy Situation of our Affairs; the only Difference was as to the Manner of giving them Relief, and even that did not bear a Question; this Tax upon Salt was then thought so grievous upon the Trade, the Manufactures, and the Poor of this Nation, that it was given up even by the Right Honourable Gentleman who has now made the Motion for reviving it. I wish he had given us some Reason for his being now of a different Opinion, from what he was of at that Time; for it must proceed from some Fact, or from some Circumstance that has either happened since that Time, or is soon to happen. If he foresees any extraordinary Event, I wish he had been so good as to communicate it; for my own part, I can see none that can possibly induce me to change my Opinion; but on the contrary, I foresee many for confirming me in the same Sentiments I was then of; and which I think ought to confirm every Man who considers the Consequences of Things, and has a stronger Regard for the Liberties of his Country, and the Happiness of Posterity, than he has for his own immediate Interest.

' I am very ready to believe, that every Man acts from the justest Motive, and from a sincere and hearty Regard for the Interest of his Country, and for the Happiness of his Fellow-Subjects; but as the true Motives of a Man's acting or speaking cannot be with any Certainty discovered by another, therefore we are to regard only what he does or says. A Man may act honestly, may argue justly from very bad Motives; and on the other Hand we know, that many wrong Actions and foolish Arguments have proceeded from Motives, that were in themselves generous and good. Let us then in Charity believe, that whoever differs from us is in a Mistake, and that whoever agrees with us, acts from the same good Motives we do ourselves; then we shall examine each other's Arguments with Candour; then is Truth most likely to prevail.

' Let us not confound the Matter in Hand, and believe that the Question now before us, is, whether or no a Relief ought to be granted to the Landed-Interest: That is no way at present the Question in Debate. By the Resolutions of this House upon the Supply, there is 500,000*l.* to be raised for the Current Service of the Year; the raising of this Sum we have already made necessary; our Resolution is not to be recalled. We are now in a Committee of Ways and Means, and the only Question before us, is, whether we are to raise this Sum of 500,000*l.* by laying a Shilling upon Land, or by reviving the Duty upon Salt. Neither of them can be a Relief to the Landed Gentlemen; upon the contrary both must be burthensome to them. But the one or the other we have made necessary, and therefore the only Question now before us is, by which of these Ways we shall raise this 500,000*l.*

' This being then the true State of the Question, we are to consider which of these Methods will be most convenient for the Nation in general, and that we are to choose without any Respect to who is, or who is not to contribute thereto; for we are never to do any Injury to our Country for the sake of any private Man, or of any particular Set of Men. The Thoughts of raising a General Excise, I find, have been disclaimed by every Gentleman, who has spoke in this Debate; I hope this Nation will never be in such slavish Circumstances, as that any Man dare openly avow such a Design; but I wish that every Gentleman that has talked upon this Subject, had explained to us what he meant by a General Excise; for if any Gentleman thereby means, that the People are to pay Excises upon every Thing they use either for Food or Raiment, he will find that there is no such General Excise in the most arbitrary, the most slavish Country upon Earth. I believe there is no Country under the

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Sun, where the People pay an Excise for the Water they drink, and yet in some Countries it will be allowed that there are such Things as General Excises. I therefore take it, that the proper Meaning of a General Excise relates not to the Things upon which it is raised, but to the Persons from whom ; and every Excise is a General Excise, if the whole Body of the People, the Poor, the Needy, the most Wretched, are obliged to contribute thereto. If this be the Meaning of a General Excise, the Excise now proposed to be raised upon the People of this Nation, is as General as any one that can be, or ever was invented under the most absolute Tyranny. And if this be granted, and tamely submitted to by the People, it may be an Encouragement to ambitious and wicked Ministers in future Times, to proceed a Step farther, and lay another Excise upon some other Commodity used by the Generality of the People ; that again will give Encouragement to a third Attempt, and so on, till at last the People of this Country be subjected, as well as some of our Neighbours, to a General Excise in the most extensive Sense ; that is, an Excise upon every Person, and upon almost every Thing, that can be converted to the Use of Man.

‘ Such a General Excise was never establish’d at once in any Country, it has every where been introduced by Degrees ; and in all the Countries where such an Excise has been established, we may generally observe, that the first Step made towards it was, the introducing this very Excise now proposed to be laid upon the People of this Nation. When we were involved in a heavy and expensive War, when we were fighting for every Thing that was near and dear to us, when our Land Tax was at four Shillings in the Pound, when every Thing we could think of was loaded with Duties and Customs, it was then a Sort of Necessity upon us to submit to such an Excise ; but if we agree to it now, during a Time of profound Peace, and when no Necessity calls for our Submission, will it not then be a Precedent for every Excise that in future Times may or can be invented ? And a few more Excises would, I fear, render our Liberties precarious, and entirely dependent upon the Good-Will and Pleasure of those, who shall happen to be intrusted with the chief Power of collecting the Publick Revenue. The giving a Man half a Crown is indeed no Precedent for my giving him my whole Estate ; but if I repeat my Generosity too often, and continue it too long, I may happen to put it in his Power to take the Residue from me, whether I will or no, and in such Case, I am afraid, it would be too late to alledge, that the one is no Precedent for the other ; for if by my Simplicity I reduce myself to such Circumstances, I must submit

mit to whatever he may be pleased to call a good Precedent. I hope no Project will ever be set on Foot, for converting any of our present Taxes or Customs into Excises; but if ever such a Project be set on Foot, I shall then, I believe, be able to shew, that no Dutch Custom can in that Respect be a good Rule for us. The Nature of their Government, the Situation and Condition of their Country, and the Nature of the Commerce carry'd on by them, is so vastly different from ours, that what may be safe and easy in one Country, may be grievous to the People, and inconsistent with the Liberties of the other.

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' I am very far from thinking, that four or five hundred Officers at the Disposal of the Crown, can at any Time be of dangerous Consequence to the Freedom of Elections, or to the Liberties of the People; but I cannot be persuaded, that I think meanly of my Country, when I declare that I am jealous of such a Number as seven or eight hundred, added to a vast Multitude of Tax-Gatherers we had before among us. When the Balance of Power comes near to its just Equilibrium, a small Weight thrown into either Scale oversets the Balance, and the Equilibrium can never be re-established without a great deal of Danger and Trouble. It is certain, that a Multitude of Officers at the Beck of an Administration, and spread over all the Counties, Cities, and Boroughs of the Kingdom, may have a vast Influence at all Elections; and if ever they should happen to receive Orders for that Purpose, we may judge what Use they will make of the Influence they may have: I believe it will be generally agreed, that if ever we should have an Administration wicked enough to make Use of such an Influence, it will not be converted towards the Preservation of the Liberties of the People. The Character of those great Patriots, who first contrived this Duty, was no Argument for the Continuance of it, much less is it an Argument for the Reviving it. They did not out of Wantonness contrive such a Duty; they were constrain'd by a fatal Necessity, to lay it upon the Nation at that Time. They made no bad Use of it, but we are not from thence to infer, that no bad Use will ever be made of it: From our own History we may be inform'd, that a very bad Use has been made of several Things, which for many Years after the first Institution had never been converted to any unlawful Purposes. Wherever there is any such Danger to be fear'd, we ought not willingly, we ought not presumptuously to expose ourselves thereunto. Such Evils may be easily avoided, but are not easily removed. One of the chief Reasons urged for the abolishing of this Duty, was, the Number of Officers employ'd in the collecting thereof, such a Number of Officers was then said to be inconsistent with the

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Liberties of a free People. This Argument was then made use of, and was then admitted to be a good Argument; how it comes now to be such a trifling one, I cannot apprehend. But if it is not now admitted as a sufficient Argument against the reviving of this Duty for three Years, I much suspect, that at the End of this Term of three Years, neither this Argument, nor any other, will have Weight enough to prevent the continuing of it for a much longer Term.

‘ I must say, Sir, that I am astonish’d to hear any Man who has ever read the Articles of Union, or is in the least acquainted with the Transactions of those Times, pretend that the People of Scotland are any way intitled to an Exemption from the Salt-Duty, or from any Part of it, when it is to be laid on for the current Service of the Year. It is very well known, that it was laid down by the Commissioners of both Kingdoms, as the Basis and Foundation of the Union, ‘ That there shall be an Equality of Excises, Customs, and all other Taxes throughout the united Kingdoms.’ There was at that Time no Thought of establishing any Proportion to be raised in Scotland, with Respect to any Tax or Excise then raised, or thereafter to be raised in England, except only as to the Land-Tax. There was before the Union a Land-Tax raised in Scotland as well as in England; but in the two Kingdoms it was raised in a different Manner. In Scotland it was laid on, and levy’d by way of so many Months Assessments: In England it was laid on and levy’d by way of so many Shillings in the Pound; and therefore it became necessary to consider the Proportion between a Month’s Assessment in Scotland, and a Shilling in the Pound in England; and the Proportion was establish’d at the Rate of two Months Assessment in Scotland, for every Shilling in the Pound, that was thereafter to be raised in England. Thus the Settling a Proportion as to this Tax was necessary; but as to the other Taxes, especially the Tax upon Salt, there was no such Necessity, and therefore it was never so much as thought of.

‘ But, Sir, many of the Taxes then levied in England, being mortgaged for the Payment of Debts contracted by England, before the Union; it was therefore agreed, that the Scots should either be free from the Payment of such Taxes, or should have an Equivalent for that Part of the Debts of England, which they were to pay, by their being made subject to any Taxes so pre-engaged: And this Tax of 2 s. 4 d. on home-made Salt, was one of those Taxes that was mortgaged for the Payment of a Part of the Debts of England, therefore the Scots were to be free from it, or to have an Equivalent for it: And the Scots Commissioners at that Time most reasonably judged this Tax to be so grievous upon the
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People, that they chose rather that their Country should be free from it, than to take an Equivalent and be liable to it. Even by the Commissioners for both Kingdoms, this Tax was then thought to be such a grievous Tax, that it was presumed the Parliament of Great Britain would certainly take it off, and substitute some more reasonable Tax in its Room; in which Case, Scotland was to be subject to such Tax so to be substituted; but it was stipulated and agreed, that in such Case, they should have an Equivalent proportion'd to this new Tax, to which they were to become subject; from all which it evidently appears, that the only Reason for their having been declared free from the Payment of this 2 s. 4 d. upon Salt was, because it had been mortgaged for the Payment of a Debt contracted in England before the Union, and not comprehended in the Account of those Debts which Scotland was to pay a Part of, so that they received no Equivalent for it: But tho' this Duty had never been abolished, yet in case the Debt for which it was mortgaged had been paid by us, or otherwise provided for by a new Tax, and this Tax of 2 s. 4 d. upon Salt continu'd, and converted either to the current Service of the Year, or to the Payment of a Debt contracted since the Union, Scotland could not surely pretend to an Exemption, either from the new Tax, or from the Payment of this 2 s. 4 d. upon Salt, after its being so converted; the most that they could in such Case have pretended to, would have been an Equivalent for the new Tax they had thereby become subject to.

'Tis true, Sir, that Act of the 9th and 10th of King William, by which this Duty of 2 s. 4 d. upon Salt was established, has that terrible Word *For ever* in the Body of it. It is indeed a terrible Word, when it is annexed to such a grievous Tax. It is a Word that I am sorry my Country has so much reason to be acquainted with: But that dreadful Word, even by the Act itself, is confined; it is confined to the Payment of that Debt, for which this Tax was then appointed; and since that Debt is now otherwise provided for, it is, with respect to this Duty, to be looked on as paid, and the conditional Perpetuity in that Act, meant by the Word *For ever*, is now at an End. It is impossible therefore to presume, that if the Scots Commissioners had ever meant, that their Country should have an absolute Perpetuity, with respect to the Exemption from this Salt-Duty, they would have referred to this Act, by which a conditional Perpetuity was only established. But the Transaction was honest and fair, and the Words are plain to every Man, that has a mind to comprehend them: The Scots Commissioners had a mind that their Country should be free from the Payment of any Part of that Debt for which this Duty was appointed; and

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therefore it was agreed, that while this Duty remained appropriated to the Payment of that Debt, their Country should be for ever free from it: But it was never so much as intended by either Party, that their Country should be free therefrom, in case it should, after the Payment of this old Debt of England, be converted to the Use and Benefit of the two United Kingdoms in general.

‘ It being thus evident, Sir, that the People of Scotland have now no Title, by the Articles of Union, to an Exemption from the Payment of this 2s. and 4 d. upon Salt, the only Question then is, whether we ought out of Compassion to indulge them with such an Exemption, because the poor People of that Country are not able to pay it: I really think, Sir, we ought to have so much Compassion for the People of that Country; but then I hope it will be allowed me, that we ought to have an equal Compassion for the poor People of England: Journeymen and Day-Labourers, who have no Stock, no Property, are equally poor in all Countries; they have nothing but what they work for from Day to Day; and if it be said, that the poor People in England are able to pay this Duty, because they have high Wages, it is an unanswerable Argument against the Tax in general. It is now an universal Complaint in this Country, that the high Wages given to Workmen is the chief Cause of the Decay of our Trade and Manufactures; our Business then is, to take all the Measures we can think of, to enable our Workmen to work for less Wages than they do at present; and therefore it must be contrary to good Policy, to lay on a Tax, which it is granted would be insupportable to the Poor, if it were not for the high Wages they have; for the laying on of such a Tax must make the Continuance of such high Wages absolutely necessary, and the Continuance of them will certainly bring the Nation to Poverty and Distress.

‘ I must say, Sir, that the Reasoning of some Gentlemen upon the Subject in hand appears to me a little inconsistent: This Salt-Duty, say they, with respect to England, is a Tax altogether insensible; with respect to Scotland, it is a Tax that is altogether insupportable: In England, the Tax is raised upon such a great Multitude of People, and at so many different Payments, that no Man can feel what he pays: In Scotland, though it be raised upon the same Multitude of People, and at the same different Payments, yet if the whole were laid upon the People of that Country, every poor Man would not only feel what he paid, but would be utterly incapable to comply with the Payments required: In England, it can raise no Grumbings, no Murmurings, nor any Complaint among the People: In Scotland, it would raise such terrible Discontents, as might disturb the Peace and Quiet of
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the Kingdom and endanger the Constitution. How inconsistent is this Way of Arguing? What an Insult is this upon the People, who quietly submit to the Loads that are laid upon them?

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‘ The Distinction that has been made between the Gross Charge and the Gross Produce of this Duty, seems to be something new. There is certainly as much Reason for this Distinction almost in every Branch of the Customs or Excise, as there is for it in the present Case; and yet I never heard it made use of by any of the Officers of the Revenue. But supposing this Distinction to be reasonable, yet if we examine the Particulars of the Account that has been given us, we shall find that several Articles have been put to the Gross Charge, which really ought to be put to the Gross Produce, because they are actually raised upon the People, though they come not to the Use of the Publick, but to the Use of the Merchants and Dealers in Salt. I am surprized to hear it pretended, that the Allowance for prompt Payment ought not to be reckoned as a Part of the Gross Produce, or that the Sum allowed for that Discount is not raised upon the People. Does any Man suppose that the wealthy Dealer pays his ready Money for the Benefit of his Customers, or that the Consumer pays the less for his Salt, because the Merchant from whom he purchases paid the Duties in ready Money? Does not every Man know, that these prompt Payments are made by the rich Dealers, only for their own Account; and that notwithstanding their being allowed a Discount of 10 *per Cent*, yet they sell as dear as if they had paid the full Duties? The Article then of 20,000 l. for prompt Payment, is not to be deducted, but is to be looked on as a Part of the Gross Produce.

‘ The 11,000 l. allowed for Waste on Salt carried Coastwise is likewise an Advantage only to the Dealer: It is no Advantage to the People, for every Farthing of that Sum is raised upon and paid by them. The Allowance arose from a Presumption that there was a Waste on Salt carried Coastwise; and therefore Three Pence *per* Bushel on all white Salt, and Three Halfpence *per* Bushel on all Rock-Salt carried Coastwise, was allowed to the Dealer in Salt. But it is certain, that in such Case there can be no Waste, there is always rather an Increase, because of its being very dry when put on Board, and afterwards made to swell and become more weighty by the Moisture of the Air, to which it is exposed in the Removing of it from Place to Place: Since there can be no Waste, we must presume, that the Whole is bought and consumed by the People; and we know that they always paid for it the same Price as if the full Duty had been paid by the Dealer. This Allowance did not even so much as
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induce the Dealer to sell cheaper, for the Consumer always paid for the Carriage, as well as for the Duty and first Cost, and the longer the Carriage was, the Consumer always paid the higher Price. This 11,000 l. is therefore to be considered, as a Part of the Gross Produce.

‘ The Allowance for Rock-Salt melted, is of the same Nature. This arose from a Supposition, that in the Melting of Rock-Salt, and refining it into white Salt, there was a great Waste, and therefore ten Pound Weight in Sixty-five was allowed Duty free. But I have been informed, and the Fact appears reasonable, that Rock-Salt dissolved in fresh Water, will produce its own Weight in white Salt, and when dissolved in Sea-Water it will produce one fourth Part more. If we only suppose that there is no Waste, we must presume that the whole is bought and consumed by the People ; and we know that they always paid as much for white Salt made out of Rock-Salt, as they did for any other Sort of white Salt ; therefore we must conclude, that though this Allowance of ten Pound Weight out of Sixty-five, be a Deduction from the Revenue, yet the Duty upon every Grain of it is raised upon the People ; and consequently this Article which is 36,000 l. *per Annum*, must likewise be added to the Gross Produce. These three Sums therefore of 20,000 l, 11,000 l. and 36,000 l. being added to the Gross Produce, as stated by the Gentleman who was pleased to enter particularly into this Account, will make it amount to 297,350 l. which is the lowest Computation we can make of the Sum, that is to be yearly raised upon the People of England only, by the Revival of this Tax.

‘ But, Sir, if we consider the many Frauds, that have always been committed as to Salt pretended to have been exported, and as to Salt pretended to have been used in the curing of Fish, we must presume, that a great deal more Salt is every Year used by the People, than what pays Duty to the Publick ; and as the Consumer always pays the full Price, as if the Duty had been regularly paid upon the whole, though these Frauds occasion a Deduction from the Revenue, yet the Duty upon the whole is paid by the People ; and therefore we must presume, that a much larger Sum than what I have mentioned must be yearly raised upon the People. This Presumption is brought almost to a Demonstration, by the Number of the People in this Nation, even as computed by those who have spoke in Favour of this Duty : According to their own Account, the Number of the Inhabitants in England, amounts to 8,000,000 ; if then we suppose that every one of them uses, one with another, but a Peck of Salt in a Year, we must reckon that a Shilling at least is raised upon every Person by the means of this Duty, because the
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laying on of this Duty makes the Salt at least a Shilling a Peck dearer, than it would otherwise be ; and therefore we must compute that by the reviving of this Duty, there will be at least 8,000,000 of Shillings, or 400,000 l. raised Yearly upon the People of England only ; and this Sum I really take to be the lowest Computation that can justly be made.

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‘ Let us now, Sir, consider what we are about : We are to raise 500,000 l. for the current Service of the Year ; this we certainly ought to raise in that Method, which will be least burthenfome to the Nation in general ; and if we chuse to raise this Sum by reviving the Salt-Duty for three Years, we make the People really pay 1,200,000 l. out of which there is but 500,000 l. brought clear into the Publick Revenue. If this be Publick OEconomy ; If this be common Prudence ; If this be a Relief or an Ease to the People of England, I leave the World to judge. I think that I can now averr, that when I argue against the Salt-Duty, I plead the Cause of my Country ; I plead the Cause of the whole Body of the People of England : I do not indeed plead for a Relief to them, I find there is no Relief to be given ; but I plead against laying a new, a heavy, an intolerable Burthen upon them. We have by our former Resolutions made the raising of 500,000 l. necessary, but do not let us charge the People with the Payment of 1,200,000 l. in order to raise this 500,000 l.

‘ From what I have said, Sir, it plainly appears how much more expensive it will be to the Nation, to raise 500,000 l. by reviving the Salt-Duty, than to raise it by a Shilling in the Pound Land-Tax ; and yet it has been pretended, that there will be but a small Difference as to the Expence : This really surprizes me, for Figures can neither be mistaken or misconstrued. In order to bring this Difference as low as possible, it has been pretended that the raising of the Salt-Duty will cost but 22,000 l. *per Annum* ; but I always reckoned, that it cost full 25,000 l. and I must still reckon so, till I see it contradicted by the Commissioners Accounts ; for the raising or paying the 19,000 l. annually for Bounties was never any additional Expence to the Publick. It has likewise been pretended, that the raising of a Shilling in the Pound Land-Tax, costs near 18,000 l. *per Annum*, by reason of the Office kept in Commission for that Purpose ; but these Gentlemen forget, that this Office is kept up, and costs as much, when there is but one Shilling in the Pound, as when there is 4 s. in the Pound Land-Tax, and therefore I still insist upon it, that the raising of 500,000 l. by 1 s. in the Pound additional Land-Tax, will really cost the Nation but 13,500 l. *per Annum*, extraordinary Expence, and consequently the Difference as to this Article in England only, is

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at least 11,500 l. *per Annum*. But must not we add to this, the 2600 l. extraordinary Charge in the Victualling Office, occasioned by this Duty? since this is certainly a Charge brought upon the Nation by reviving this Duty. which we should not be liable to, if we should raise what Money we want, by a Land-Tax. Must not we likewise add the 20,000 l. *per Annum* allowed for prompt Payment? for as this is no Benefit to the Consumer, it is a real Expence to the People, as much as the 25,000 l. is, which is paid for Management. These three Sums added together make the real Difference of the Yearly Expence, between the Salt-Tax and a Shilling in the Pound Land-Tax, amount Yearly to 34,100 l. This, I say, Sir, is the Yearly Difference; but I hope no Man that considers it will pretend, that this, or even three Times this Sum, is the whole Difference of the Expence the Nation is to be at, in raising 500,000 l. by a Salt-Duty in three Years, instead of raising 500,000 l. by a Shilling in the Pound Land-Tax in one Year; for the Difference will then be a great deal more than three Times this Sum. We must then reckon the whole Expence of the Salt-Duty for three Years, and from that deduct the Expence of raising 1 s. in the Pound Land-Tax for one Year only: The Salt-Tax will then cost us three Times 25,000 l. or 75,000 l. for Management; three Times 2600 l. or 7800 l. for extraordinary Expence in the Navy; and three Times 20,000 l. or 60,000 l. for prompt Payment; which three Sums added together amount to 142,800 l. And from this we are only to deduct 13,500 l. viz. one Year's Expence of raising a Shilling in the Pound upon Land, the remaining Sum will then be 129,300 l. This is the real Difference of the Expence which the Nation is to pay for the raising of this 500,000 l. in three Years by a Salt-Duty, instead of raising it in one Year by a Land-Tax. This is near Six and Twenty *per Cent.* and if we add the additional Expence in Scotland, and the Interest which the Publick must pay upon borrowing this 500,000 l. for the Current Service of the Year. it will, I am sure, amount to above 30 *per Cent.* which, I must say, is a pretty considerable Premium for three Years Forbearance of Payment, even if the Nation were not to pay a Shilling of the Money till the full End of the Term. How consistent it may be with the publick Good of this Nation, to pay so high a Premium for Forbearance. I shall not determine; but I am sure it will be inconsistent with the private Good of any honest Man in the Kingdom to pay such a Premium. This, Sir, is the most favourable Light that the Affair before us can with any tolerable Reason be put in, even by those who appear most sanguine for the Revival of this Duty; but if we consider it in the Light I have before put it

it in, and suppose that 400,000 l. is to be raised Yearly upon the People, by the means of this Duty, it will then appear much more odious ; for upon that Supposition, which, I am afraid, will prove too true, the Nation is to pay 700,000 l. for three Years Forbearance of the Payment of Five, which is a Premium of very near 150 *per Cent.* for Forbearance.

‘ To pretend, Sir, that this Duty cannot give Occasion to any great Frauds or Perjuries, because there is little or no Money advanced by the Subject, and repaid by the Government upon any Event, is to me a little odd. It is not the Repayment of Money by the Government that is the Cause of Frauds and Perjuries ; it is the great Advantage that a private Dealer may make, and the little Risk he runs by such Frauds and Perjuries, that tempts him to the committing of such. He does not consider from whom, but how much Money he may make by such a Fraud ; and therefore in all Manner of Taxes, where the Tax or Duty amounts to much more than the Prime Cost, there have always been, and always will be great Frauds ; if the Dealer can by any Fraud avoid paying the Duty, he makes his Advantage by selling at a high Price. Considering then that this Duty to be laid upon Salt is no less than ten Times the Price it may be bought for at the Pits, what a fruitful Fund do we establish for Frauds and Perjuries ? It may not perhaps be easy to smuggle Salt away from the Pits without paying the Duty ; but how easy will it be for the Dealer, after he has given Bond to pay the Duty, and taken the Salt away from the Pits, to put it aboard of a Ship, and re-land it again at some Bye Creek or Corner, or by some other Way to get a Certificate of its having been exported ; by this Fraud he gets up the Bond which he gave for the Duty, and though he gains no Money back from the Government, yet when he sells to the Consumer Salt for Four or Five Shillings a Bushel, which cost him but a Groat a Bushel, does he not make a delicious, a tempting Profit ? And the more tempting it must be, because of the little Risk he runs ; for he risks only the Loss of a Groat, for the Venture of making Four Shillings clear Profit. If he can but cheat the Publick, he drives the Trade, I may say, of an Apothecary, and makes a Shilling of every Penny he lays out. Again, as to the Salt delivered Duty-free for the Fishery, there is still a greater Temptation, since it depends entirely upon the Honesty of the Curers themselves ; none but themselves can tell what Quantities they have made use of : If they can but sell their Salt privately to Dealers or Consumers, they may get free of the Duty by swearing that the whole was employed in curing of Fish ; and considering what little Regard is had to what is now, by way of Proverb, called a Custom-House Oath, I am afraid this Sort of Perjury

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will be by much too frequent : Nor is the Loss sustained by the Revenue the only Disadvantage ; these Baits and Temptations that are thrown in the People's Way for perjuring themselves, may really at last destroy all sort of Morality and common Honesty among them ; and may so much diminish that Regard which every Man ought to have for an Oath, that no Man's Life or Property can be secure, against the Plots and Perjuries of his Neighbours.

‘ As to our Manufacturers and poor Labourers, this Tax certainly will be a Charge upon every one of them in general. It will be a Shilling at least to every single Man or Woman that is fit for Labour ; and if we suppose a poor Man to have a Wife and three small Children, we can hardly suppose him to make use of less than a Bushel of Salt a Year for his Family ; to such a Man this Tax will amount to at least 4 s. 6 d *per Annum*. Such a Thing as a Shilling, or a Crown, may be looked upon as a Trifle by a Gentleman of a large Estate and easy Circumstances, but a poor Man feels sometimes severely the want of a Shilling ; many a poor Man has for want of a Shilling, been obliged to pawn the only whole Coat he had to his Back, and has never been able to redeem it again. Even a Farthing to a poor Man is a considerable Sum ; what Shifts do the Frugal among them make, to save even a Farthing ? Let us but imagine ourselves in the Condition of a poor Labourer, with a Wife and three Children, almost the whole of the Wife's Time taken up in looking after the Children, and the Husband working for a Shilling a Day, and we shall easily see how hard it is to make such a poor Man pay a Tax of Four or Five Shillings a Year, for the Salt he must make use of for the scanty Support of himself and Family.

‘ This Tax must therefore be a Charge upon all our Manufactures in general, I shall suppose it as small as any Gentleman pleases, yet it must be some ; for if it be a Charge upon the Manufacturers, they must lay it upon the Manufactures they deal in ; and if we consider how narrowly the Merchant, especially the Foreign Merchant, goes to work in the Bargains he makes, we must see what a Disadvantage this Tax may be to our Export of Manufactures. If any of our Neighbours can sell but one tenth Part of a Farthing in a Yard cheaper than we can do, they will at last turn us entirely out of the Business. This holds as to all our Manufactures in general, but as to some particular Manufactures, such as Glass, Leather, Earthen-Ware, &c. it is still more grievous, because Salt is one of the Materials made use of in their very Composition, and therefore I hope if this Duty be revived, there will be an Exception as to them.

* I find it is granted by all, that the making use of Salt is an Improvement to Land ; but it is said, that this Tax cannot injure such Improvements, because every Man may have as much soul Salt Duty-free at the Pits as he pleases, provided he has an Officer along with him. But does not every Man see, that this can only be of Advantage to those, whose Lands lie near the Salt-Pits ? even as to them, this Duty will be an additional Charge, for they cannot get an Officer to attend for nothing ; we all know that when a Man is once got into an Office, he has many Ways of squeezing a Perquisite from those who are obliged to apply to him, and him only. And as to all Lands that lie at a Distance from Salt-Pits, it must be allowed, that the reviving of this Tax will be a full Bar to any future Improvements of them by Salt, which is an Improvement that has been successfully made use of, through all Parts of England, ever since the Duty was taken off.

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‘ It has, I think, in this Debate been admitted by all, that the Duty upon the Salt made use of in curing the Salt-Provisions necessary for a Ship of 150 Tons, for a Six Month’s Voyage, will amount to Forty Shillings ; and yet it has been asserted by some, that the reviving of this Duty will be no Burthen upon the Navigation of Great Britain. Those who reason in this Manner, do not surely consider the Frugality and Sparseness that must be observed in Trade. I am sure there is not a Merchant in Europe, that has Occasion to freight a Ship, but will think Forty Shillings a very great Difference in the Freight between two Ships of 150 Tons each, if they be of equal Goodness in every other Respect ; and he will always employ that Ship which he can have Forty Shillings cheaper than the other. This must put a full Stop to the employing of any English Ship, or to the Victualling of any Ship in England, where another Ship can be made use of, or when a Ship can be victualled in any other Part of the World ; and therefore it must be not only a Burthen upon our Navigation, but we must consider, that it would soon be the entire Destruction of our Navigation, and consequently of our Navy, if it were not for the Navigation-Act, and some natural Advantages which we have over the rest of the World. I do not know how some Gentlemen may get, or how they may spend their Estates ; but in an Affair which chiefly regards the Trade, and the Tradesmen of this Nation, I am surprized to hear Shillings and Crowns, nay even Pounds Sterling, talked of in so light and trivial a Manner : The poor Tradesman may be properly said to earn his Living by the Sweat of his Brow ; and if he does not consider every Farthing that he is to lay out, he will soon come not to have a Farthing to pay for a Bit of Bread : To such a

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Man, even the Half-Farthing, which is now so contemptuously talked of, would be of mighty Consequence.

‘ I come now, Sir, to consider this Tax with respect to that honest, industrious and frugal Sett of People, the Farmers of England. I hope there are but few of them as yet obliged to live in the Manner as hath been represented. I hope no Farmer in England is as yet obliged to make his Family dine upon Bread and Cheefe, or upon boiled Cabbage, without a Bit of pickled Pork, Salt-Beef, or Bacon, to give them a Savour. I do not know indeed what they may be brought to, if we begin to multiply Excises upon them ; but I must now consider them in their present Way of Living : In that Way I must look upon them and their Servants, as making use of some Salt-Provisions almost every Day in the Week, for the whole Year round : In such a View, I am sure, a Family of Sixteen working Persons will consume in Salt a deal more than a Shilling’s worth a Head, according as it must sell after this Duty is laid on ; I believe they will consume above two Shillings worth a piece ; and it has been computed by Men who understood thoroughly the OEconomy of their Family, that a Family of ten Persons would for all Uses generally cost the Master at least Six-pence a Week for Salt, according to the Price it sold at formerly, when this Duty was subsisting. At this Rate there is scarcely a Farmer in England, but must pay above twenty Shillings a Year towards this Tax, and if he pays a rack’d Rent, I do not know where he is to get this twenty Shillings, unless he runs in Arrear to his Landlord, in order to answer what he must pay the Tax-Gatherer : In such a Case, I believe, our Landed-Gentlemen will not get much by the Relief that is now pretended to be given them. But besides this additional Family-Expence upon the Farmers, we know that they make use of a great deal of Salt for several Uses in Husbandry : The Advantages made thereby they must now give up, or otherwise they must pay dear for the preserving of them.

‘ I hope, Sir, I am as sensibly touched as any Man with the Difficulties, that many of the Landed-Gentlemen in England labour under ; and I shall always be as ready as any Man to approve of any Measures for giving them a real Relief : But I shall never pretend to amuse them, or to impose upon their good Sense, by calling that a Relief, which is only taking a Burthen off one of their Shoulders, and putting it upon the other ; and that this is the only Relief now proposed for them, I can, I think, demonstrate as clearly, as ever any Thing was demonstrated by Numbers. I believe no Man will pretend that any Gentleman of a free Estate of 500 l. a Year in Land, or upwards, is in the present Case an Object of Compassion,

or that the Relieving of such Men from the Payment of a Shilling in the Pound Land-Tax, can have any Weight in the present Debate ; and as for those Gentlemen who have large Estates in Land, but heavily charged with Mortgages, if they will, for the Sake of Grandeur and the Name of a great Estate, continue to pay the Land-Tax and the Interest upon the Mortgages, it is certainly their own Fault, and therefore they do not deserve the Consideration of this House. The Landed-Gentlemen then, whose Estates are under 500 l. a Year, are the only Persons whose Condition and Circumstances can in the present Case be of any Consequence ; and as to such, let us examine whether what is now proposed will prove to be of any Relief to them. It is well known, that there are many Landed-Gentlemen in England, whose Estates are valued so low, that they do not pay above a Groat of the Shilling in the Pound Land-Tax ; it is certain, that there are few or no Landed-Gentlemen who pay the whole Shilling ; there is not, I believe, one Estate in England that is rated at the full Value, with respect to the Land-Tax ; it may therefore be reasonable to suppose, that all the Land-Estates in England are, one with another, rated for the Land-Tax at one Half of the real Value. It has been admitted, that a Farmer of 100 l. a Year, has generally sixteen Persons in Family ; I think we may then reasonably suppose, that the Landed-Gentlemen in England of 400 l. a Year, keep one with another twenty Persons in Family ; and upon these Suppositions let us see what Relief the Gentleman of 400 l. a Year is to receive from the new Scheme now before us. Such a Man's Estate is supposed to be valued at 200 l. a Year as to the Land-Tax, consequently at 1 s. in the Pound he saves only 10 l. in the whole, by taking off this Shilling. Now let us consider what he must pay to the Duty on Salt consumed in his Family : A common Farmer with ten Persons in his Family, is supposed to pay 6 d. a Week for the Salt consumed in his Family, and therefore a common Farmer with twenty Persons in his Family, must be supposed to pay 1 s. a Week, one with another, for the Salt consumed in his Family ; and if we consider the great Waste that is made of that Commodity about a Gentleman's Family, and the many Visitors and their Servants, and the poor necessitous Neighbours, that will always be hanging in or about a Gentleman's Family who has an Estate of 400 l. a Year, we cannot allow less than eighteen Pennyworth of Salt consumed weekly about such a Gentleman's Family ; we must therefore suppose, that every Gentleman of such an Estate, pays yearly for Salt consumed in his Family 3 l. 18 s. and since, by the laying on this Duty, we raise Salt to above ten Times the Price it formerly

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fold at ; therefore we must conclude, that nine Tenths of 3 l. 18 s. that is, about 3 l. 10 s. is Yearly drawn from every Gentleman of 400 l. a Year, by means of this Duty on Salt ; and as he is to pay this Sum Yearly for three Years instead of the 10 l. Land-Tax, which he is by this Means, to be made free of, is it not plain and evident, that he pays ten Guineas in three Years, for the Sake of getting free of the Payment of 10 l. in one Year ? The utmost then, that can be pretended, is, that he saves by this fine Scheme about Half a Year's Interest upon 10 l. Is this the Relief so mightily bragg'd of ? Will any Gentleman of common Sense choose to have his Farmers, his Cottagers, his Labourers, and the Manufacturers that consume the Produce of his Lands, heavily taxed, in order to save 4 or 5 s. Interest upon the 10 l. that he was to have paid to the Land-Tax.

' This is the Case, Sir, as to Landed-Gentlemen of 400 l. a Year, but as to all the Landed-Gentlemen of smaller Fortunes, they will be Losers by this Measure that is proposed for their Relief. Their Families cannot be a great deal less numerous than the others ; their Servants will be as wasteful, and they must entertain their Visitors as well as the other ; therefore we cannot suppose that any Gentleman's Family in the Country will cost him much less than 1 s. a Week for Salt ; at this Rate he must pay Yearly towards the Duty now to be laid on, about 2 l. 7 s. this amounts in three Years to 7 l. so that a Gentleman of 200 l. a Year, will be 2 l. out of Pocket, and a Gentleman of 100 l. a Year, will be 4 l. 10 s. out of Pocket, by reviving the Salt-Duty for three Years, instead of 1 s. in the Pound Land-Tax for one Year ; and whether those Gentlemen that have great Families to maintain, many Children to provide for, and but one, two, or three Hundred a Year Land-Rent, to answer all their Occasions, are not the greatest Objects of Compassion, nay, are not the only Objects of Compassion among the Landed-Gentlemen in England, I leave the World to judge. Every Gentleman that ever kept an Account of the Expences of his Family, must be a Judge, whether the Suppositions I have made are just : If they are just, I am sure the Figures cannot be controverted ; and therefore, I hope, we shall hear no more of the great Relief that is to be given to the Landed-Gentlemen of England.

' Having thus shew'd to what Sort of People this Salt-Duty will be a Disadvantage, I think it would not be just in me, not to take some Notice of those to whom it will be an immediate Advantage. As to all the Gentlemen in England of very large Land-Estates, it will be an immediate Advantage ; it will, indeed, save a Trifle to them. With respect to them, I hope, I may be allow'd to make use of
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the Word Trifle ; a Sum of Money may be call'd a Trifle when applied to the Rich, but to the Poor no Sum of Money can be properly said to be a Trifle. But this immediate Advantage accruing to the rich Landed-Men, will be soon over-balanced by the Ruin that it will bring upon their Country, and upon their own particular Estates ; and I am glad to find, that most of the rich Landed-Gentlemen in England are upon the same Side of the Question with me. It shews a generous Contempt of private Advantage, when opposed to the publick Good ; but those who will reap the greatest Advantage from the Measure now proposed, are those who are in good Posts and Places, and have handsome Salaries coming in. It is very true, that their Salaries are rated at the full Value of the Land-Tax : The taking off 1 s. in the Pound Land-Tax, is really putting 5 *per Cent.* into their Pockets, which cannot be drawn out again by the Salt-Duty, because they either keep no Families, or they keep their Families in Town, where most of their Servants are at Board-Wages. To such Gentlemen the Measure now proposed will certainly be advantageous, and to such only that Compassion which we have heard so much of, is properly to be applied. But one would not think that a Man who has 100 l. a Year from the Publick, should grudge to pay 5 l. a Year out of it to the publick Expence ; or that the Saving 5 l. a Year in such a Man's Pocket, should be such a mighty Concern to every Man who has the Good of his Country at Heart. I am persuaded that every Gentleman who has the good Fortune to be in any such Place or Employment, will shew as generous a Contempt of Self-Interest, and as honourable a Regard for the publick Good, as is or can be shewn by the Gentlemen of great Land-Estates, who with them are the only Persons in the Nation that can reap any Benefit from the Measure now proposed.

Since then it appears plain, that what is now proposed can be no Manner of Relief, but will certainly be an additional Charge upon the Landed-Gentlemen of small Estates ; and since they are the only Landed-Gentlemen in England, who stand in need of, and deserve the Compassion of this House, I think all the Arguments that can be drawn from Pity and Compassion, come full against our agreeing to the Revival of this Duty upon Salt ; and therefore I may now in my Turn plead with all those who hear me, to have Pity and Compassion upon the poor Landed-Gentlemen in England. How hard will it be to make a poor Landed-Gentleman of a Hundred a Year pay 7 l. instead of fifty Shillings ? Why should the poor Landed-Gentlemen be so much over-charged for the Sake of a small Ease to those who have plentiful Estates in Land, or considerable Salaries coming in from
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a Post or Place that gives them little or no Trouble? This is really, if I may be allow'd to make use of the Words, *Giving to the Rich, and sending the Poor empty away.* But in the present Case, our Compassion pleads not only for the poor Landed-Gentlemen, but for all the Poor of the Nation. Let us but consider how many poor Families are maintain'd upon 8d. or 1s. a Day, which the Father earns by hard Labour and Toil: A Bushel of Salt is the least that can be consumed in a Year by a poor Man, his Wife, and three or four small Children: How cruel is it to take four or five Shillings a Year away from the Support of such a poor Family, more especially when one half of that Money, at least, is to be made a Compliment of to wealthy or fraudulent Dealers, or to idle and profligate Tax-Gatherers? I hope every Man that hears me, will allow his Pity and Compassion to exert itself to its utmost Height. I hope every Man will consider upon which Side of the present Question are the Cries of the Poor and the Wretched, and the Blessings of those that are yet unborn. The Happiness or Misery of Posterity, the Flourishing or Decay of our Trade and Commerce, the Preservation or Loss of our Liberties, in my Opinion, depend in a great Measure upon the Question now before us; and therefore I am persuaded that every Gentleman will consider it thoroughly, before he determines what he is to do.

Then the Question being put upon Sir Robert Walpole's Motion, it passed in the Affirmative, by 225 against 187.

Feb. 10. Upon the Report of the Resolutions of the Committee, and the Motion made for agreeing to them, the Question being put, it was carried in the Affirmative, by 205 against 176, and a Bill was order'd to be brought in pursuant to those Resolutions.

The same Day Mr Turbill presented to the House Copies of Proceedings, Papers, and other Instruments, &c. relating to the Sale of the late Earl of Derwentwater's Estate, pursuant to the Order of the House of the 2d Instant.

Upon the Motion of Mr Sandys, the Pension-Bill was read a third Time, without any one Speech being made against it; and Mr Sandys was ordered to carry the Bill to the House of Lords, and desire their Concurrence.

Feb. 11. The Lord Vere Beauclerk reported the Names of the Committee appointed to inquire into the Affair of the Charitable-Corporation; as follows, viz. Mr Perry, Mr Palmer, Mr Barnard, Lord Viscount Limerick, Hon. Mr Digby, Mr Watkin Williams Wynn, Mr William Bromley, Jun. Mr Edward Harley, Mr Walter Plumer, Mr Sandys, Mr Oglethorpe, Sir Thomas Saunderson, Sir John Rushout, Lord Morpeth, Mr Thomas Wyndham, Sir Thomas Robin-

Sir R. Walpole's Motion for Reviving the Salt-Duty agreed to, and a Bill order'd to be brought in pursuant thereto.

The Papers, &c. relating to the Sale of the Earl of Derwentwater's Estate, read before the House.

The Pension-Bill read a third Time, and sent to the Lords.

Names of the Committee appointed to inquire into the Charitable-Corporation.

son, Mr Danvers, Mr Bramston, Mr Winnington, Mr Conduit, and Mr John Campbell.

Feb. 14. The House resolv'd to present an Address to the King for several Papers, &c. relating to the Sugar-Colonies.

Feb. 15. The Sugar-Colony Bill was read a second Time : Then the House proceeded to hear Counsel upon the said Bill, which lasted also the 17th, 18th, and 23d, during which Time all the Papers call'd for were laid before them.

Feb. 22. The several Papers, Instruments, &c. relating to the Sale of the Earl of Derwentwater's Estate, which had been presented to the House, were referr'd to a Committee.

Feb. 23. The House proceeded to the farther Hearing of Counsel for and against the Sugar-Colony Bill, and the Counsel on both Sides having finish'd their Argument, Mr Winnington stood up, and spoke as follows :

Sir,

' I find that some of the Counsel at the Bar have endeavoured to turn the Affair now before us into such a Shape, as if the Question to be determined were, whether the Northern Colonies, or the Sugar-Colonies ought most to be encouraged by this House. This, Sir, is not at all the Question now before us ; the Affair in hand is the Dispute between the English and the French Commerce : We are now to determine, whether we ought to encourage a French Trade, which tends to the Ruin of our own Sugar-Colonies, for I have not heard it so much as disputed by any Man, but that they must be soon undone, if some Redress be not given to them in Time ; and the only Redress now proposed, the only Redress they want at present is, that a Parliament of England will only do as much as they can to discourage the French Sugar-Trade. One would really imagine, that such a Proposition would not meet with any Opposition in a British House of Commons.

' This, Sir, being the true State of the Question, I do not wonder to see it twisted and turn'd into twenty Shapes, rather than to let it appear in its own genuine and natural Colour ; but of all the Lights this Affair has been put into, the most invidious is, that of pretending that the Sugar-Colonies by this Bill are contriving a Method of putting their Sugars and Rum upon us at any Price they please to demand ; that by this Bill they want us to make a Law for enabling them to sell their Sugars and Rum, at a much dearer Price than what is necessary. If this, Sir, were truly the Case, I should be against this Bill as much as any Man in this House ; but to me it appears evident, that what they want, is only to have such a Price for their Sugars and Rum as they can possibly make them at so as to live thereby : This is a reasonable Demand, and this we ought to grant, if it be in our

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An Address for Papers relating to the Sugar-Colonies.

The Sugar-Colony-Bill read a second Time.

The Papers, &c. relating to Lord Derwentwater's Estate referr'd to a Committee.

Debate on the Sugar-Colony-Bill.

Mr Winnington.

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Power. Now, Sir, I think it has been made appear, that the French are our greatest Rivals in the Sugar-Trade ; and it has been likewise made appear, that the French have been enabled to become our Rivals in the Sugar-Trade, only by the Trade carried on between them and our Northern Colonies ; the great Vent they thereby have for their Rum and Molosses, and the easy Access they thereby have to Lumber, Horses, and all other Necessaries for their Sugar-Plantations, which are naturally much more fruitful than ours, enable them to sell their Sugars and Rum at a much lower Price than it is possible for our Sugar-Planters to sell at ; it is therefore apparent that our Sugar-Plantations must be undone, or we must fall upon Ways and Means of preventing the French from selling their Sugars so cheap as they do : Those Ways and Means are easy ; they are every Day in our Power ; put a Stop to the Trade that is carried on between our own Colonies upon the Continent and the French Sugar-Islands, and you must at once a great deal enhance the Price of all French Sugars ; the Charges of making their Sugars will then be a great deal more, and their Rum and Molosses will yield them nothing ; they must lay all Charges upon the Returns of their Sugars, and therefore it will not be possible to sell them so cheap as they are sold at present. By this Method our own Sugar-Colonies will be greatly encouraged, and the French may be totally undone ; whereas if we leave Matters in the present Situation, the French Sugar-Colonies will be increasing every Day, and in a little Time our own will be quite destroyed.

‘ But, Sir, it has been pretended, that if we put a Stop to the Trade now carried on between the French Sugar-Islands and our Colonies upon the Continent, it will in a great Measure ruin our Colonies upon the Continent, because it will entirely destroy their Fishery, and also their Trade with the Indians, both which are carried on principally by the Means of the Rum and Molosses, which our Colonies purchase at so cheap a Rate from the French Sugar-Islands : If there were any Foundation for this, it would indeed be a very great Objection to the Bill now before us ; but as our Colonies upon the Continent carried on their Trade with the Indians, and also their Fisheries, long before they had either Rum or Molosses from the French Islands, it is plain that neither of those Trades can depend entirely upon their Trade with the French Sugar-Islands ; but upon the contrary it is evident, that the Opening of this Trade with those Islands, has not only encouraged the French Sugar-Plantations to the great Detriment of our own, but has also in a great Measure discouraged or rather entirely destroyed the Sale of English Spirits in that Part of the World, which is a considerable

considerable Loss to this Country ; for it is well known, that before our Colonies upon the Continent of America fell into this destructive Trade with the French Sugar-Islands, they made use of great Quantities of English Spirits, both in their Fishing Trade, and also in their Trade with the Indians. And if we should put a Stop to this Trade with the French Sugar-Islands, there is no Doubt but our own Colonies would again fall into their former Method, and would be able to carry on as extensive a Trade with the Indians, and as great a Trade in Fishing, by the means of English Spirits, as they ever did by the means of French Rum. Besides, Sir, if some Rum or Molosses were absolutely necessary, do not we know that they could have as much from our own Sugar-Islands as they had Occasion for, and within a Trifle at as low a Price as they can have the same sort of Rum or Molosses from the French Sugar-Islands? for in Proportion as the French Sugar-Plantations decrease, it is certain that our own will be daily increasing: Though Barbadoes may perhaps be as much improved as the Extent of Ground will admit of, yet we know that Jamaica, and several other of the Islands belonging to us in that Part of the World, will admit of very great Improvement; we know that if they were all improved to the full Extent, they would produce as much or very near as much Sugar, Rum and Molosses as could be consumed in Europe and in America. Thus, Sir, to me it appears plain, that the Method proposed by the Bill now before us, is the only proper Method for discouraging the French Sugar-Plantations, and encouraging our own; and that it is a Method by which no Part of our own Dominions can be any way injured; therefore I must be for the Bill, and for that Reason, Sir, I move, That the Bill may be committed.

This Motion being seconded by Mr Horatio Walpole, Mr George Heathcote stood up and spoke as follows:

Mr G. Heathcote.

Sir,

‘ I should with all my Heart be for the Bill now before us, if I could find any thing in it that would encourage our own Trade to the Detriment of that of the French; but really, Sir, I cannot find any such thing in this Bill; upon the contrary, I clearly foresee, that by the Method thereby proposed, we are going to destroy a very profitable Branch of our own Trade, and to do all that is in our Power to encourage, or rather to set up a new Trade for the French, which they of themselves, notwithstanding their utmost Endeavours for that Purpose have never been able to accomplish. We are amusing ourselves with a vain Conceit, that it is impossible for the French to carry on or manage their Sugar-Plantations, without the Assistance of the Lumber,

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Horses and other Necessaries, which they have from our Colonies upon the Continent; and that their Rum and Molasses would be of no use to them, if they could not dispose of them to the Inhabitants of our Northern Colonies. If it were so, I am sure the French would permit that Trade to be carried on openly and freely; they would not leave it under the Discouragement of being carried on in a clandestine Manner, by giving great Bribes to the Governors of their Sugar-Islands: We have no Reason to despise the French Knowledge as to the Methods of improving any Trade they aim at; and we know that they have for several Years been doing every thing that was in their Power to encourage their Sugar-Plantations. Can we then imagine, that they would have left such Checks and Discouragements upon the Trade between their Sugar-Islands and our Northern Colonies, if they had thought that their Sugar-Works or Plantations could not subsist without it? No, they know that that Trade is a great Hindrance to the Improvement of their own Colonies upon the Continent, and therefore they have endeavoured to put a Stop to it by Degrees, but have never as yet been able to effectuate what they proposed; and now we are by a publick Law to contribute as much as we can to render their Endeavours effectual. I must therefore look upon what is proposed by this Bill, as a Method not at all certain for improving our own Sugar-Plantations to the Discouragement of the French, but as an infallible Method for improving the French Colonies upon the Continent to the very great Discouragement of our own; I therefore think, I have very good Reason to be against the Bill as it now stands, and consequently I must be against committing it.

Mr Perry.

Mr Perry spoke next.

Sir,

• The Affair now before us is of such Consequence to the Navigation, the Trade, and the Happiness of this Nation, that it ought to be weighed with the utmost Nicety and Exactness: There may be a great deal said upon both Sides of the Question. For my own part, I have not had Opportunities of acquiring so extensive, and so general a Knowledge of Trade as the worthy Gentleman upon the Floor, who spoke first in the present Debate; but as I have been dealing in Trade ever since my Infancy, I have a good many Facts to lay before you, and several Things to say upon the Subject in hand, which, in my Opinion, ought to make us extremely cautious of laying any Restrictions upon the Trade of any Part of our Dominions. But it is now, I think, too late to enter upon a Debate of so serious, and so extensive a Nature; and therefore I am for adjourning the Debate till

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to-morrow, or any other Day this House shall please to
fix on.

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Mr Barnard.

Then Mr Barnard rose up, and said,

Sir,

‘ If the House be resolved to proceed, I will speak to the Affair in hand ; but if otherways, I will not now offer to detain them with any thing that I have to say upon the Subject. [*Here he made a Pause, and the House seeming inclined to proceed, he went on as follows.*] In the Question now before us, Sir, it is certain that some Relief ought to be immediately thought of for our Sugar-Colonies. Our Sugar-Trade is without Doubt at present in a most lamentable Condition, and must necessarily in a few Years be quite undone, at least in so far as regards our Exportation to foreign Markets : But, Sir, I am very far from thinking that the Method, proposed by the Bill now before us, is the proper Method for giving Relief to our Sugar-Colonies ; I do not think it will afford them any Relief ; it may cramp and injure our Northern Colonies in some Branches of Trade now carried on by them, but it never can be of any Advantage to our own Sugar-Colonies, as long as they make more Sugar than is requisite for answering the Consumption within our own Dominions. I should be glad that we could fall upon any way of making the French Sugars dearer than they are at present, but I am afraid all Attempts of that Nature will prove to be chimerical ; and I am sure there is no Method proposed by the Bill now before us, that can in the least answer that Purpose : As to Lumber, Horses, and other Necessaries for Sugar-Plantations, which are now brought from our Colonies upon the Continent to the French Sugar-Islands, there is no Provision in this Bill against their being furnished with such Things from thence for the future ; and it would be very wrong to make any such Provision ; for it is very certain, that if they could not have such Things from our Colonies, they would soon fall into the way of having all such Necessaries from their own Colony at Canada. It cannot be pretended but that the French Colony at Canada, with a very little Encouragement, would soon be able to furnish the French Sugar-Islands with Lumber, Horses, and all such Necessaries : Though the Navigation of that River be difficult and uncertain in the Winter Time, yet they might easily fall upon a way of bringing all such Stores down that River in the proper Season, and lodging them at their own Settlement at Cape Briton, from whence they could easily be transported to their Sugar-Islands at all Seasons of the Year : This, Sir, would, I am persuaded, be the Consequence of our prohibiting the Exportation of such Things from our Colonies to the French Sugar-Islands ; and thus, instead of dis-

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discouraging their Sugar-Plantations, or enhancing the Price or first Cost of their Sugars, we should by a British Act of Parliament do more towards the encouraging their Settlements at Canada and Cape Briton, than they themselves with all their Edicts and Arbitrary Power, have been able to do since the first Establishment of those Settlements. In a little Time we might expect to see those Northern Seas swarming with French Ships and Sloops, and a great Part of the Trade of our own Northern Colonies being thereby destroyed, our own Seamen must either starve at home, or run into the Service of the French for the sake of daily Bread.

‘ But, Sir, granting that it were impossible for the French Sugar-Islands to have what Horses, Lumber, and such Things they want, from their own Colonies upon the Continent, or from any other Part of America besides our Settlements there, yet we all know that they could have Plenty of all those Necessaries from France itself ; and it is well known, that Sugars are such bulky Commodities, that they require a great many Ships to bring them to Europe, which Ships return again to the West-Indies for the most part in Ballast, so that the Freight outwards is generally at a very low Rate ; by which Means they might have all such Things from Europe, for a very little more than prime Cost : And suppose that the Price of such Things stood them a little more than what is paid for them in our Sugar-Islands, yet we know that such a small Sum of Money is laid out in furnishing a Sugar-Plantation with all such Necessaries, that it bears but a very small Proportion to the other Charges that are necessary in furnishing and managing such a Plantation ; the Difference in this Respect between the Charges of a Plantation, in their Islands or in ours, would be so small that it could not be taken Notice of, nor would it any way enhance the Price of their Sugars in any Market in Europe.

As to Rum, I think it is not pretended that the French deal much either in the making or vending of that Commodity, but it is said, That our Northern Colonies purchase all their Molasses from them, and thereby contribute towards the enabling of them to sell their Sugars at the low Price they do at present ; and it is farther said, That if our People upon the Continent of America did not purchase their Molasses of them, they could make nothing of them in any other Way : This is really supposing the French to be a more stupid Sort of People than any of the Native Indians upon the Continent. They know that Rum is made of Molasses ; they know that Rum is valuable in almost every Part of the World ; they understand the Art of Distilling Rum from Molasses ; or if they do not, it is certain
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there is no such mighty Secret in the Art, but that they may easily learn it. Can it then be doubted, but that if they could not sell their Molosses to our Colonies upon the Continent, they would set up Stills of their own, and make Rum out of their own Molosses? And could not they sell that Rum both in America, Africa, and Europe, as well as we do? To this it is answered, That their Government would not allow them to make or sell Rum; because it would prejudice the Sale of Brandy, which is the natural Product of France itself: But this we have not the least Reason to suppose; for if the very Being, or even the Well-Being of the French Sugar-Colonies depended upon their making and selling Rum, we cannot suppose, that the French Government would ruin them, in order to keep up the Price of their Brandies; unless we were to suppose, that the King of France, and all his Advisers, were Masters of Vineyards and of nothing else: We may as well suppose, that the King of France would make an Edict, for obliging their Sugar-Planters to throw all their Molosses into the Sea; because if they are made into Rum in any Place, either in Europe or America, it may prevent or prejudice the Sale of French Brandies. We must therefore presume, that if the French Sugar-Planters could not dispose of their Molosses in the Way they now do, they would not only be permitted, but would actually set up Stills of their own, and would make their Molosses into Rum, and send it to Europe; also to their own Colonies of Mississippi, Canada, and Cape-Briton, in order to supply all the Indian Nations therewith at a cheap Rate; and they would likewise be able to smuggle a great deal of it into our Northern Colonies, and even into Great Britain and Ireland, notwithstanding any Laws we could make, or any Precautions we could use to the contrary. We may perhaps, by putting Arbitrary Powers into the Hands of our Commissioners of the Customs and Excise, make it difficult to bring French Rum ashore in any of our Dominions; but it would be absolutely impossible to prevent the Sale of it to our Fishing Vessels in the North Parts of America. Thus instead of buying their Molosses at the cheap Rate we now do, and having the Advantage of manufacturing them into Rum ourselves, we should give them the Advantage of the Manufacture, and should buy their Rum at a dear Rate; and instead of giving them Lumber and other such Goods for their Molosses, we should be obliged to give them ready Money for their Rum. As the Sale of our Lumber, Horses, and such Things, even now depends entirely upon the Courtesy of the Governments of their Sugar-Islands, we may depend upon it, that if our People could take nothing but ready Money from them

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in Exchange for such Goods, no such Sale would ever be allowed of ; such strict Injunctions would be sent over, that their Governours durst never venture to permit, or even so much as to wink at, any British Ships ever coming into any of their Ports, and those Goods are too bulky to be smuggled into any Part of the World.

‘ Since then, Sir, we cannot propose to make the Cost of the French Sugars higher than it is at present, let us consider and examine if we cannot make the Cost of our own Sugars less, in order thereby to enable our Sugar-Colonies to sell their Sugars at a lower Price, than they can possibly do at present : This, Sir, is the proper and only Consideration for this House to enter into. We ought never to make Laws, for encouraging or enabling our Subjects to sell the Produce or Manufacture of their Country at a high Price, but we ought to contrive all Ways and Means for enabling them to sell cheap ; for in all Matters relating to Trade, we ought chiefly to consider the Foreign Exportation ; and it is certain, that at all Foreign Markets those who sell cheapest will carry off the Sale, and turn all others out of the Trade : We may indeed confine our own Subjects to the buying of what Sugars they have Use for, from our own Sugar-Colonies, at any Price they please to put upon what they have to sell, but we have no Power over Foreigners ; so that unless our Sugar-Planters do sell their Sugars as cheap as any other Sugar-Planters can do, we shall soon lose our whole Foreign Trade as to Sugars : And even as to our Home-Trade, our Sugar-Planters must all join together, and consider nicely the Home-Consumption, if they have a mind to keep their Sugars at a much higher Price, than what they are sold for in other Parts of Europe ; for if they in any one Year make more Sugars than we can consume at Home, it will of course run down the Price of all their Sugars for that Year, even at Home amongst our selves. Supposing that we consume 80,000 Hogheads of Sugar every Year, if they should in any one Year send home 100,000 Hogheads, the additional 20,000, which we have no Occasion for, cannot be sent abroad, they must be sold amongst ourselves ; and the Sale of that 20,000 would run down the Price of the whole 100,000. So that let us put this Affair in what Shape we will, the Methods proposed by this Bill can never be any real Relief to our Sugar-Colonies.

‘ There are many Ways, Sir, for enabling our Dealers in Sugar to sell their Sugars at a less Price, than they can do at present ; one Method the French have long ago chalked out to us, and that only I shall mention at present. The French foresaw the great Advantage of encouraging their Sugar-Colonies ; they knew the Hardships that ours laboured under

under, from their being obliged to send all their Sugars to be unloaded in England, before they could be exported to any other Part of Europe : They knew how greatly this enhanced the Price of our Sugars, at all the Markets in Europe ; and in order to give their Sugar-Colonies an Advantage over ours, they gave them a Liberty of sending their Sugars directly to foreign Markets, without unloading, or so much as touching at any Port in France. This is an Advantage over our Sugar-Colonies, which the French Sugar-Colonies have enjoyed for several Years. Let us then follow the Example of our Neighbours the French ; let us at least put our Sugar-Colonies upon an equal Footing with their Rivals. This will be one great Encouragement to them, and it is to be hoped, that in the Course of this Bill, a great many others may be thought of, which will be real Advantages to them, without doing any Injury to any of our other Colonies in that Part of the World.'

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Mr Barnard was replied to by Colonel Bladen :

Colonel Bladen.

Sir,

' As the only Dispute now is, whether this Bill ought to be committed, I think the Gentleman who spoke last, has given a very good Reason for the committing thereof ; he said, That some Relief ought certainly to be given to our Sugar-Colonies, if any such can possibly be contrived or thought on. I believe every Member of this House is of the same Opinion, and therefore every one must think, that the Bill ought to be committed. We shall thereby have Time to consider and examine all the Circumstances of so weighty an Affair ; we shall have Time to consult and advise with all those of our Acquaintance, who understand any thing of Trade and Commerce, by which Means we may have an Opportunity of contriving the most proper Methods for encouraging and promoting our Sugar-Trade, without injuring any other Branch of our Trade ; and when we are in a Committee upon the Bill, every Member will then have an Opportunity of offering such Clauses and Amendments as he may then think proper : In my Opinion, it cannot so much as admit of a Debate, whether the Bill is to be committed or not. The least Delay in this Affair may be the Occasion of the Loss of the Bill, and therefore I am for committing it immediately.'

Mr Oglethorpe spoke next :

Mr Oglethorpe.

Sir,

' There never was perhaps before this House an Affair of greater Moment, than the Affair which is now before us. The whole British Trade, all our Colonies and Settlements in America, may be ruined and undone, or very much encouraged and strengthened by the Resolutions we come

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to upon the present Occasion. Every Man, who knows any thing of the Trade and Commerce of this Nation, knows how much the whole depends upon our Colonies in the West-Indies. Every Man may see by the Accounts that have been laid before us, what vast Quantities of Goods are every Year brought from thence, by the Re-exportation of which we balance our Trade with almost every Nation in Europe; and I believe I may say, that it is owing to this only, that the general Balance of Trade has always continued so much in our Favour.

‘ Let us but consider the vast Quantities of Goods, the vast Quantities of British Manufacture and Produce, sent from hence every Year to our several Settlements in the West-Indies; let us but consider what Numbers of British Ships and British Seamen are employ’d in the West-India Trade, and we shall see how much that Trade and those Settlements ought to be the Care and the Concern of a British Parliament.

‘ Our Sugar-Colonies are of great Consequence to us, and I join in Opinion with those, who think that we ought not to leave them under any Hardships, or under any Distress. Let it never be said of a British House of Commons, that the Distress of any of their Fellow-Subjects was pointed out to them, and they neglected or delayed to do what was in their Power for their Relief: But our other Colonies in that Part of the World, ought also to be consider’d; from them we have likewise Yearly very large Quantities of Goods, such as Tobacco, Rice, Naval-Stores, and the like, which contribute not a little towards preserving the general Balance of Trade in our Favour. We ought not to encourage or raise one Colony upon the Destruction or Detriment of another; much less ought we to grant a Favour to any Subject, or to any particular Set of People, which may prove to be against the publick Good of the Nation in general.

‘ I am convinced, that some Relief, or some new Encouragement ought to be given to our Sugar-Colonies, and I shall readily join in any Measure for that End, which is not inconsistent with the publick Good: But this, Sir, is no Reason for committing the Bill now before us; for if there is not one Clause or one Article in it proper for the Purpose for which it was designed, we cannot properly go into a Committee upon it; we may in a Committee upon a Bill add Clauses; we may make Amendments, but we are not to make a new Bill. In such a Case the proper Method would be, to have the present Bill withdrawn, and to have a new Bill brought in; and this will be a much surer and a speedier Method of procuring Relief for our Sugar-Colonies, than by sending up a Bill to the other House, so irregular or so improper,

improper, that they may find themselves under a Necessity of throwing it out, or which is much the same, of letting it drop in their House, whereby our Sugar-Colonies will be obliged to continue for one Year more, at least, under the Hardships and Incumbrances, which now lie so heavy upon them. This Affair being therefore of the utmost Consequence, I must be of Opinion, that it is now too late, and the House too thin, for entering upon the present Debate: Besides, Gentlemen, we ought to have a Regard to the Chair, and not subject him to so great and so long a Fatigue; I must therefore join in the Motion that the Debate may be adjourned till some other Day.'

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Then Mr Giles Erle stood up, and said :

Mr Giles Erle:

Sir,

'As the great Advantage reaped by the Nation, by any Branch of its Trade or Manufacture, depends upon the Exportation; therefore when any Matter of Trade comes to be considered in this House, we ought to regard only those Methods or Means, which may tend towards the encouraging and promoting the Exportation of any Manufacture: Now as to the Case before us, if our Colonies do not sell their Sugars cheaper, or at least as cheap as the French, Dutch, or any other Nation can possibly do, it is certain, that no Part of that Manufacture can possibly be exported to any foreign Market. I shall therefore be for any Method, that can reasonably be proposed, for enabling them to sell cheaper than they do at present, but I shall never be for empowering them to exact higher Prices from any of their Fellow-Subjects, being convinc'd, that no Laws we can make, can oblige Foreigners to pay a higher Price for our Sugars, than that for which they may every Day purchase foreign Sugars of equal Goodness.'

Then Mr Barnard and some other Members declaring, 'That they would rather be for having the Bill committed, than that it should be thrown out; because they thought it was necessary to do something, this Session of Parliament, towards the Relief of our Sugar-Colonies; the Question was thereupon put for committing the Bill, which was agreed to.

The Sugar Colony Bill committed.

Feb. 25. Sir Charles Turner presented the Salt-Bill to the House, which was read the first Time, and order'd to be read a second Time; and a Motion being made for reading it a second Time on the 2d of March, the same was strenuously opposed, as being too short a Time for considering a Bill of so much Consequence; but upon a Division, it was carried in the Affirmative, by 206 against 180.

The Salt-Bill read a first Time, and order'd a second Reading.

The same Day Mr Sandys reported from the Committee appointed to inquire into the Affair of the Charitable Corpo-

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Debate concerning
the Expelling Mr
Robinson, a Mem-
ber of the House,
who together with
John Thompson,
had fled beyond
Sea, on account of
the Charitable Cor-
poration.

ration, the Result of their Inquiry as to the Time, Manner, and Circumstances of George Robinson, Esq; Member for Marlow, and Mr John Thompson's withdrawing themselves beyond the Seas. Then a Debate arose as to expelling Mr Robinson; many Members were for expelling him immediately, because tho' they were to endeavour, by Rewards and Punishments, to bring him over in order to make a Discovery, yet they were to have a particular Regard to their own Honour: That it was propos'd to grant him a general Indemnity by Act of Parliament; and putting the Case that he thereupon came over, and made as full and as ample a Discovery as could be desired, yet he would still continue a Rogue, notwithstanding such Compliance; and no Man of Honour would keep him Company: That therefore it would be very improper that he should continue a Member of that House; and for that Reason it would be necessary to expel him before the bringing in of this Bill for a general Indemnity; for if the Bill were once pass'd, he might next Minute take the Benefit of it, and they could not in Honour afterwards expel him; because it would be inflicting a Punishment upon him for a Crime, for which he had got an Indemnity by Act of Parliament.

To this it was answer'd, ' That it were to be wish'd that the expelling or not expelling of him had not been mentioned: That the only Thing they had then before them, was to contrive Means for prevailing upon him to come over and make a Discovery of that whole Affair: That if they should then expel him, it would be terrifying him from coming over at the same Time that they were inviting him to come, which would be a very inconsistent Manner of Proceeding: That besides, it was not regular for them to proceed directly to the expelling of him, without giving him Time to be heard: That by the Report then made to them, there was no Crime as yet proved against him; for by that Report they could take no Notice of any thing but his Bankruptcy, and as to that he ought at least to have Time to be heard before he was expelled: That the Honour of the House was as much concerned in proceeding regularly even against a Rogue, as in not sitting with a Rogue; and therefore they were against so abrupt a Method of expelling him.'

To this it was reply'd, ' That by the Report then made to them it appeared, that a Statute of Bankruptcy had been issued against him; and that thereby his whole Estate, Real and Personal, was vested in the Commissioners, and consequently he could not have the Qualification as to an Estate, that was necessary for every Man in order to intitle him to a Seat in that House: That moreover, by the Laws relating to Bankrupts, a Bankrupt was declared to be out of the King's Protection;

tection; he was in a manner an Outlaw, and therefore could not continue a Member of that House; and for that Reason they thought that the Bankruptcy alone was sufficient Ground for the House to proceed immediately to the expelling of him.'

Anno 5. Geo. H.
1731-32.

Hereupon some Members, Barristers at Law, declar'd, 'That the Question as to a Man's being a Bankrupt or not, could not properly come before them, more especially before he had submitted and acknowledged himself a Bankrupt: That a Statute of Bankruptcy's being taken out against a Man, was no incontrovertible Proof of his being a Bankrupt; because if upon his Petition it should appear that he was not a Bankrupt, the Statute would in that Case be superseded.' They allow'd, 'That by one of the Laws against Bankrupts in Queen Elizabeth's Time, a Man who was declared a Bankrupt according to that Statute, was declared to be out of her Majesty's Protection; but that there had been very few declared Bankrupts according to that Act: That they did not know of any one but Mr Ward of Hackney; and that therefore no Argument could be drawn from that Statute as to the Case in Hand.'

Then Mr Pelham propos'd, 'That the Bill of Indemnity to be brought in as to Robinson, should contain an Exception as to the Privilege of his sitting in that House, by which they would leave themselves at Liberty to act as they thought proper, supposing he should appear and take the Benefit of the Indemnity to be granted him.' To this it was object'd, 'That the sending up of such a Bill to the other House, would be giving them a Power to intermeddle in an Affair relating to the Privilege of that House, which was not at all proper to be done, and therefore it was propos'd to have the Indemnity Special; but this likewise was object'd to, as being what would not be effectual for the Purpose intended, because upon such an Indemnity it was not to be presumed that Robinson would come over; that he could not be thereby secured against Parliamentary Censures, and therefore he would never trust to any Special Indemnity.'

Mr H. Pelham.

'Then it was order'd, 'That Leave be given to bring in a Bill for the Appearance of George Robinson, Esq; at a certain Time to be fix'd in the Bill; and it was also order'd, 'That Leave be given to bring in a Bill to encourage and compel John Thompson and his Accomplices to surrender themselves, with the Books and Effects of the Corporation, at a certain Time to be fix'd in the same Bill.'

A Bill order'd for the Appearance of George Robinson and John Thompson.

March 2. The Salt-Bill was, pursuant to the Order of the Day, to have been read the second Time; but before the Reading thereof, Mr William Pulteney stood up and spoke, as follows:

Debate on the second Reading of the Salt-Bill.

Mr W. Pulteney.

Sir

Anno 5. Geo. II.
1731-32.

Sir,

‘ By the ancient Orders and Methods of Proceeding in this House, nothing relating to the raising of Money, or Taxing the People, can properly be brought before us, till it has gone regularly through the Committee of Ways and Means. In the Committee of Supply we examine every Article relating to the Publick Service ; we settle the several Articles ; we examine what Sums will be necessary for each Article ; and we resolve upon granting such Sums as we then determine to be necessary. In the Committee of Ways and Means we take into our Consideration those Methods, which are proposed for raising the Sums resolved on in the Committee of Supply, and after we have fixed upon those Methods which are judged most proper, we order a Bill or Bills to be brought in, in pursuance of the Resolutions then made : This has been the constant and uninterrupted Method of Proceeding in all such Matters ; and therefore it is certain that no Bill, relating to the Taxing of the People, can be regularly brought into this House, till it has once been considered of, and resolved upon in the Committee of Ways and Means. When this Affair about the Salt-Duty was brought before us in the Committee of Ways and Means, the only thing that was then thought of, was, the laying the same Duties upon Salt, as had been laid on by the Acts of the 5th and 6th and of the 9th and 10th Years of King William III. and thereupon we came to a Resolution for reviving those Duties : This was the Resolution as to the Duty upon Salt we then came to, and in pursuance of this Resolution a Bill was ordered to be brought in ; but by the Bill brought in, as pretended, in pursuance of that Resolution, I find that a great many Laws are thereby to be revived, which we never so much as thought of, or once mentioned in the Committee of Ways and Means.

‘ Besides, Sir, I find that by this Bill there is a new Tax to be laid upon the People of Great Britain ; a Tax I find is by this Bill to be laid upon white Herrings ; and I am sure there was no such Tax ever mentioned in the Committee of Ways and Means, nor did we come to any Resolution for laying any such Tax upon the People of Great Britain. There is not so much as one Word of Herrings, or of any other Fish, in the Resolution we then came to. Since then the Bill now before us is no way warranted by that Resolution, the Passing thereof as it now stands would be a breaking through the most solemn Orders of this House, in Matters of the highest Consequence, That of raising Money and taxing the People of Great Britain ; I therefore think, Sir, that the Bill brought in ought to be withdrawn, and this whole Affair brought again to be considered in the Committee-

tee of Ways and Means. As we are now more apprized of the Matter before us, than we were at first, we may upon second Consideration come to such Resolutions, as may authorize the bringing in and passing of such a Bill as is now before us, without transgressing the ancient Orders and constant Rules of Proceeding in Matters of so great Consequence.

To this Mr Scrope answer'd :

Mr Scrope,

Sir,

' The Objection that has been made, as to Order, cannot properly come in to be debated till the Bill has been read, for till then we cannot pretend to be certain of the Contents ; if the honourable Gentleman thinks proper, he may then insist upon his Objection ; but in my Opinion, there is not the least Foundation for such an Objection ; for when the Bill is read, I believe it will appear, that there is no Law mentioned therein to be revived, but what is generally referred to in the Resolution of the Committee of Ways and Means ; and it has always been the Practice of this House, to revive Laws by a General Reference : There are every Year some expired or expiring Laws revived or continued by a General Reference to them, without particularly and at length reciting every one of them.

Hereupon Sir John Rushout replied :

Sir J. Rushout.

Sir,

' As I was from the beginning, so I am still against this extraordinary Method of raising Money by laying a Duty upon Salt ; but since such a Method was to be chosen, the regular Way would have certainly been to have come to this downright and plain Resolution, That a Duty of so much *per Bushel* should be laid upon all home-made Salt for a Term of three Years. I now find such a regular and plain Resolution was not to be made, because in such a Case there could not have been the least Pretence for not making the Duty general all over the United Kingdoms ; and therefore to save a Part of the Nation from the Payment of the greatest Part of this Duty, this extraordinary Method has been taken, which is as inconsistent with the ancient Method of Proceeding in Parliament, as the Duty itself is inconsistent with the Freedom or the Happiness of the People : But we see the Consequence ; for by taking this new and extraordinary Method, a Blunder was committed in the very first Formation of the Resolution which we were to come to ; whether that was really a Blunder, or a Design to save some People from paying any thing towards this Tax, I shall not pretend to determine ; but I would have some People to consider, that it is very probable this Tax may be continued after the Expiration of this Term of three Years ; and if it be, it is not very probable that the Indulgence now to be granted, will
then

then be continued. This Blunder or Design, be it which it will, in the forming of the Resolution which we were to come to in the Committee of Ways and Means, was however accidentally then taken notice of, and was accordingly corrected in the best Manner possible ; but I wish, Sir, that the Gentlemen who were then, and seem still to be so fond of this extraordinary Method of taxing their Fellow-Subjects, had then likewise taken Notice of all the other Blunders that were then committed, rather than that the ancient Method of Proceeding in this House should be altered, or that this House should, by such Blunders, be brought in to do any thing that is irregular in an Affair of so great Consequence.

Mr Wal. Plumer.

Mr Walter Plumer spoke next.

Sir,

‘ When this Affair was under our Consideration in the Committee of Ways and Means, there was not certainly any Duty or Tax mentioned, but those that were laid on by the Acts of the 5th and 6th, and of the 9th and 10th Years of the Reign of King William : There was no other Duty so much as mentioned at that Time, by any Gentleman in the Committee ; but it appears by this Bill now before us, that there are Acts of Parliament to be revived, by which a quite different Duty was laid upon the Subjects of this Nation : These Acts being repealed, they are now in the same Case as if no such Acts had ever been made, and therefore the reviving of them is the very same Thing, as to make a new Law for the Taxing of the People of this Nation ; and consequently it must be granted, that the reviving of them, without having considered them in the Committee of Ways and Means, and coming to a proper Resolution for that Purpose, is contrary to the constant Practice of this House, in all Matters relating to the raising of Money, or imposing Taxes upon those who sent us hither, for the Preservation of their Liberties and Properties, as well as of our own. The Taxing of the People, is an Affair of the highest Consequence ; no Tax ought to be agreed to, without the most mature Deliberation ; and for that Reason our Forefathers established it as a Maxim, never to impose any Tax, without first having it under our Consideration in the Committee of Ways and Means ; so that as long as we observe the ancient Orders of this House, no Tax can ever be imposed, without coming several Times under the Consideration of the House ; but if we depart but one Step from this ancient Custom, it will be a most dangerous Precedent ; we know how easily bad Precedents are improved upon, and by such Improvements our Constitution may be quite overturned : The most heavy Taxes may come to be the Produce of a Day, may the Produce of a few Hours,

‘ But,

‘ But, Sir, This is not all : By this extraordinary Bill, and this extraordinary Method of Proceeding, there is another dangerous Precedent introduced, another Breach of the Orders of this House committed. In all Bills by which the People of this Realm are subjected to any Penalties or Forfeitures, it is the ancient and the known Practice of this House, to leave Blanks for such Penalties and Forfeitures in the first Draught of the Bill, which Blanks are never filled up till the Affair comes before the House in a Grand Committee upon the Bill : It must be twice read and considered before such Blanks are filled up, and a considerable Time must intervene between the first Reading of the Bill, and the filling up of such Blanks, in which Time every Member has an Opportunity to consider the Affair, to consult with others, and to determine whether it be consistent with the Liberties of the People, to subject them to any Penalties or Forfeitures in such Cases, and to what Penalties or Forfeitures it may be proper to make them liable. This is a wise and a necessary Precaution, and ought not to be departed from upon any Account whatsoever : But in the Case now before us, we are to revive several Laws, which is the same thing as to make new Laws, by which the People are subjected to many and grievous Penalties and Forfeitures, without giving ourselves any Opportunity to consider of such Penalties and Forfeitures when this Bill comes before us in a Committee ; because all the Penalties and Forfeitures are already filled up in the Laws referred to and to be revived by this Bill as it now stands. The Circumstances of Things and of Countries alter every Day ; those Penalties and Forfeitures, to which the People were subject by those Laws while subsisting, may now be extravagant, may now be absolutely inconsistent with the Freedom of the People, though they were not so when those Laws were first made ; and therefore there having been once such Penalties and Forfeitures established, cannot afford us the least Pretence for departing from an Ancient Custom, which has been so long observed, and has always been deemed absolutely necessary for the Preservation of the Liberties and Privileges of this Nation. For which Reason, Sir, I shall be for the withdrawing of this Bill, and resuming the Consideration of this Affair in the Committee of Ways and Means.’

Anno 5. Geo. II.

1731-32.

To this Sir Robert Walpole made the following Answer : Sir R. Walpole,

Sir,

‘ I have been long accustomed to be affronted and insulted, both within Doors and without ; but while my Intentions are good, while my only Aim is to serve my Country to the best of my Knowledge, and to the utmost of my Power, I shall always disregard the Reflections that are thrown out

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1731-32.

by those, whose Sentiments or Views may be different from mine. Gentlemen may talk which way they please about Blunders, but there was no Blunder, nor any bad Design in the first or second Draught of the Resolution passed in the Committee of Ways and Means, nor in the drawing up of the Bill which has been brought in, in pursuance of that Resolution. Even by the first Draught of that Resolution, there was no Part of the Nation, but what was subjected to the Duties proposed to be laid upon Salt: There were some Doubts then started, which were, in my Opinion, without any Foundation: However, to satisfy those Gentlemen who had raised such Doubts, some Words were immediately added, which, according to their own Confession, put the Matter out of Dispute: And even the Case which is now pretended to be a Blunder, was under Consideration, and the Words of the Resolution were concerted so as to prevent this, or any reasonable Exceptions being taken to the Bill when it should be brought in. The Words of the Resolution we came to in the Committee of Ways and Means were, ‘ That towards raising the Supply granted to his Majesty, the several Duties on home-made Salt, granted to the late King William and Queen Mary, by an Act of the 5th and 6th Years of their Reign, for a Term of Years, and afterwards made perpetual; and also the additional Duties on Salt, granted by an Act of the 9th and 10th Years of his said late Majesty King William, and all the Duties chargeable on home-made Salt in Great Britain, which by an Act of the 3d Year of his present Majesty’s Reign, ceased and determined on the 25th of Day of December 1730, be revived and granted to his Majesty, his Heirs and Successors, for the Term of three Years, from the 25th of March next, 1732.’ I really should be glad to know what Words are wanting in this Resolution; for my own part, I cannot imagine any one Word to be wanting, unless it be the Word *and*, before the Word *which*; but the leaving out even of this Word *and* was no Blunder; even that Word was then under our Consideration, and it was judged, that it was better to leave it out.

‘ I am sure, Sir, that there is no Man but must upon the reading over of that Resolution conclude, that it refers to all and every one of the Acts any way relating to the Salt-Duty, which were repealed by the said Act of the 3d Year of his present Majesty’s Reign. The two Acts of King William and Queen Mary’s, and of King William’s Reign, which are there particularly mentioned, were the only two Acts of all those that are to be revived, by which any Tax or Duty was laid upon the Subject. It had indeed been discovered, that by Means of the Drawbacks which were allowed upon the Ex-

portation of Herrings, a great many Frauds had been committed, and the Publick had been cheated out of very large Sums of Money; and therefore it was afterwards found necessary to take off those Duties which by those Laws in King William's Time were paid upon all Salt used in the Curing of White Herrings; and the same were accordingly taken off, by an Act of the 8th of the late King, and a proportionable Duty was thereby laid upon White Herrings cured with Salt for Home-Consumption: But is it not plain that this was no new Duty? it was no new Tax laid upon the People; it was only a new Method of raising the Duty upon such Salt as should be thereafter made use of in Salting of Herrings, and therefore it was applied to the same Purposes, to which the Duties upon Salt had been before applied; it was not looked on as a new Fund, nor was it applied to any new Purposes; nay it was so much looked on as a Duty still remaining upon Salt, that when the Act was made for abolishing the Duties upon Salt, this Duty upon Herrings was not so much as mentioned in the Act; and yet by that Act this Duty ceased and was abolished as well as all the other Duties upon Salt. It is therefore plain we do not transgress the Orders of this House, or the ancient Method of Proceeding with respect to Taxes; there is no Tax by this Bill to be laid upon the People, but what was under our Consideration in the Committee of Supply, and particularly referred to in the Resolution then made.

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'As to the other Acts which are to be revived by the Bill now before us, they were all made for the more regular raising of that Duty, which had been laid on by the said two Acts of the 5th and 6th of William and Mary, and the 9th and 10th of William, and for preventing the Frauds which might be committed with relation thereunto. When we were in the Committee of Ways and Means, and had had the Reviving of those Duties under our Consideration, could any Man then imagine that we were to revive those Duties, and yet not revive all those Laws, which had been made for the regular and fair raising of them? No Man could form to himself such an absurd Imagination. These Laws were all repealed by the Act of the 11th of his present Majesty, and as that Act is particularly mentioned in the Resolution we came to, therefore we must grant that every one of the Laws mentioned in this Bill to be revived are generally referred to in that Resolution. The very Nature of the Thing itself, as well as this general Reference, brought every one of those Laws necessarily under our Consideration; and it is certain that if any of us had had any Objection to the Reviving of any of those Laws, such Objection would then have been started, and would have been fully considered; but no rea-

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sonable Objection could then, or can now be made to the reviving of any of them, or of any Part of any of them. Surely no Man will say, that it was necessary to mention particularly every one of those Laws in the Resolution we then came to; it was certainly enough to refer to them in general as repealed by the Act of the Third Year of his present Majesty; such References are frequent in the Resolutions of this House; it is what is done every Year with regard to the Malt-Tax, and yet the Malt-Tax Act of the preceeding Year, is as much a dead Law, before the new one takes place, as any Law whatever. Every Act that ever was passed in this House for raising the Malt-Tax, is in every Clause thereof as much a new Law as any Act that is by this Bill to be revived, and therefore it cannot be said that there is any Law now to be revived, but what was under our Consideration in the Committee of Supply, and is as much referred to by the Resolution we then came to, as is usual in such Cases, according to the ancient Method of Proceeding in all such Affairs.

‘ Even as to Laws inflicting Pains and Penalties upon the Subject, we know, that it is the common Practice of this House to revive such Laws by a General Resolution; it is practised every Year; Laws expiring or expired are continued or revived by General Resolutions and General Clauses, without any new Recital of the whole Act so to be continued or revived, or leaving the Penalties blank to be filled up when the House goes into a Committee upon the Bill, which is brought in for the continuing or reviving of such Laws; there are, I believe, Sir, a hundred such Precedents in the Journals of this House. The making of a general Recital of the Laws to be revived by this Bill, is only making a short Bill in place of a Book as large as the Land-Tax Bill. In my Opinion, there was not an absolute Necessity even to have mentioned in this Bill every Law that was to be thereby revived; a general Revival of all the Laws repealed by the Act of the Third of his present Majesty would have been enough; even such a general Revival would not have been contrary to any of the Orders of this House; but it was thought proper to mention every Law particularly, that no Man might have it to say, that he was caught, or that any thing was secretly foisted in, or included under the general Words of the Bill, which was not under Consideration at the Time the Bill was passed ’

Sir W. Wyndham.

Sir William Wyndham spoke next.

Sir,

‘ As to this Tax upon Salt, I must still say, that I cannot but look upon it as a very great Grievance upon the poor of this Nation. The poorest Labourer consumes for his own Personal Use as much, nay more Salt than any Member of
this

this House, or any rich Man in the Nation, and therefore we must reckon that the Poor pay as much as the Rich: There are but very few of the poor Labourers and Tradesmen that live in the Families of those that employ them, they generally live upon the daily Wages they receive, and it is very hard to make such a poor Man pay out of the poor Pittance of Wages he receives for his daily Support, as much towards the Publick Expence, as is paid by the richest Man in the Nation. We ought, Sir, to consider, that by taking from the Rich, we only diminish their Luxury, but by squeezing from the Poor, we increase their Misery. This, Sir, must be a moving Consideration to every Man that has any Bowels of Compassion towards his Fellow-Creatures.

‘But, Sir, besides oppressing the Poor, we are now, I find, to overturn the Method of Proceeding always observed in this House in the like Cases. This, Sir, is of the utmost Consequence to the very Being of our Constitution. The ancient Orders of this House ought most punctually to be observed. Some of them may perhaps seem to be of little Consequence: But if we fall into a Way of breaking thro’ them upon slight Occasions we shall soon fall into Confusion; then indeed we may probably discover, that those Orders which we now think to be trivial, were of the utmost Consequence; but then it will be too late. I am really surprized to hear it said, that a Tax upon White Herrings is a Tax upon Salt: We may as well say, that a Duty upon Fish, is a Duty upon Flesh, or that Fish is Flesh: And if we once come to give such a blind and implicit Assent to the Dictates or Assertions of any Man breathing, we may have Freedom, we may have Liberty, but I am sure it cannot then be said, that we make any Use of the Freedom we enjoy. We may perhaps now agree to this odd Proposition, that a Duty upon Fish is a Duty upon Salt; but I am sure this House was of a different Opinion when this Duty was taken off of the Salt, and laid upon White Herrings; it was then looked upon as a quite different Duty, and therefore the laying on of this Duty upon White Herrings, was first taken into Consideration in the Committee of Ways and Means, and a Resolution was there made for the laying on of this Duty upon White Herrings cured for Home-Consumption, in the Place of the Duty that had been before laid upon the Salt with which they were cured. If it had not then been looked on as a different Duty, there was no Necessity for having taken it into our Consideration in the Committee for Ways and Means, or for our having made a Resolution in that Committee before any Bill could be brought in for that Purpose.

‘But it seems, Sir, this Tax upon Herrings, or the Tax

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upon Salt, has since that Time changed its Nature ; for a Bill I find is now brought in for reviving the Duty upon White Herrings, in Pursuance of a Resolution of the Committee of Ways and Means for reviving the Duties upon Salt, laid on by two Acts, in that Resolution particularly mentioned ; in neither of which is there one Word mentioned of any Duty upon White Herrings : This Pretence might perhaps have admitted of some Shew of Reason, if neither of these Acts had been mentioned ; if we had in general resolved to revive the several Duties on home-made Salt, which by an Act of the 3d of his present Majesty's Reign ceased and determined, such a general Resolution might have perhaps afforded some Pretence for reviving this Duty upon White Herrings, but even in that Case the Pretence would have been a very lame one ; for in order to include this Tax upon Herrings, we ought to have made our Resolution still more general ; we ought to have resolved, to revive the several Duties which by the Act of the 3d of his present Majesty ceased and determined, without the inserting of those Words *Home-made Salt* ; for by the inserting of those Words, we confined the general Reference after-mentioned to the Duties on home-made Salt only, and by the inserting particularly those Laws of King William's Reign, we still more strongly confined our selves to those Duties, even on home-made Salt, which were laid on by those two Acts only : If there had been any additional Duty laid even upon Salt by any other Act, surely no Man will say, that by our Resolution, such a Duty could have been revived, though the same had ceased and determined by the Act of the 3d of his present Majesty. Nor is it any Argument for proving this Duty upon Fish, to be a Duty upon Salt, that it ceased and determined by the same Law by which the Duties upon Salt were taken off, though in that Law there was no Mention made of the Duty upon White Herrings ; because by the very Act which establishes this Duty upon White Herrings, there is an express Provision, that this Duty upon Herrings should cease and determine as soon as the Duty upon Salt should be taken off, or in Proportion, in case any Part of the Duty upon Salt should be taken off, as every Gentleman may see who has a Mind to peruse the Act of the 8th of his late Majesty, by which this Duty upon Herrings was first established.

' It has been pretended, that Precedents may be found in the Journals of this House for warranting the Method of reviving Laws, which is now contended for ; I do not believe that any such Precedent can be found. An obsolete Law may without doubt be revived by a new Law. A Law repealed may be revived, by repealing of that Law, by which

it was repealed : But I do not believe, that ever any Law was revived, till after the House had taken such Law particularly into their Consideration in some sort of Committee or another. The expired or expiring Laws are never revived or continued till they have been severally and particularly examined and considered of in a Committee, and a particular Resolution made as to each : Do not we every Year name a Committee for inspecting into the Laws expired or near expiring, and for considering which of them, and what Parts of each, are fit to be revived or continued ? Does not that Committee examine every one of them particularly, and come to a Resolution upon each Law by itself ? Are not those Resolutions reported to the House ? Then the House takes every one of those Resolutions separately into Consideration, and orders a Bill or Bills to be brought in, in Pursuance of such of the Resolutions as are agreed unto by the House. Every Member of this House knows that this is the constant Method of continuing or reviving the Laws that are expiring or expired. And is not this directly contrary to the Method we are now about ? Can any Man say, that any one of the Laws to be revived by this Bill, was ever taken into Consideration by any Committee of this House, or that any Resolution has been made and agreed to for reviving all or any one of them ? There was not so much as one of them mentioned in the Committee of Ways and Means, when we had the reviving of the Duties upon Salt under our Consideration. They are neither generally nor particularly referred to in the Resolution we then came to. In the whole Resolution, there is not so much as one Word mentioned of the reviving any Law whatever ; we resolved only upon reviving of the Duties, we did not so much as think of reviving any of the Laws relating to the collecting of such Duties. That ought to have been the Affair of another Day ; we ought to have taken every one of them separately into our Consideration, in order to have determined which of them were proper to have been revived ; and we ought to have come to a particular Resolution as to each ; and then in Pursuance of all those Resolutions, such a Bill as the present might have been regularly brought in.

‘ As to the Malt-Tax-Bill, there is no sort of Parallel. It is true, the Malt-Tax-Act of the preceding Year must certainly be expired before the new one can take Place ; but while the new Bill is under the Consideration of the House, the old is subsisting : Yet even in that Case we do not lay any Tax upon the Subject, till it has been particularly before us in the Committee of Ways and Means. We there take all the Duties laid on by the former Bill particularly into our

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Consideration, and the Resolution we always come to is, that the same Duties shall be raised upon Malt, &c. which were raised by such a former Act, particularly therein referred to ; upon this Resolution a new Bill is brought in for continuing the same Duties : This new Bill is indeed generally much the same with the former ; but in this Case there is no repealed or expired Law revived : The Bill is entirely new, and whatever Penalties or Forfeitures are thereby to be inflicted upon the Subject, are left blank to be filled up when the House goes into a Committee upon the Bill : The same Penalties are indeed generally filled up, but not till the House has an Opportunity to examine them in a Committee upon the Bill : This shews that the Method of proceeding as to the Malt-Tax-Bill can be no Precedent, nor any Authority for the Bill now before us, by which a great many Laws are to be revived, which were never inspected or considered by any Committee of this House. Penalties are to be inflicted upon the Subject, without leaving it in the Power of the House to examine them when they go into a Committee upon the Bill ; and a Tax is to be laid upon the Subject, without its having been considered of, or resolved upon in the Committee of Ways and Means.

‘ I would be glad to know how it was possible for any Member of this House, when we were in the Committee of Ways and Means, to make any Objection against any of those Laws which are by this Bill to be revived : There was not one of them so much as mentioned at that Time ; no Man then proposed the reviving of any one of them ; how then was it possible to start any Objection thereunto ? I believe till this Bill was brought in, no Man dream’d of such Laws being to be revived ; and now it is too late to make any Objections : This Bill will be passed, before any Man can have time to peruse and consider all those Laws that are thereby to be revived ; this alone may shew the Irregularity and Inconvenience of the present Method of proceeding : This shews what a dangerous Precedent we are about to make for those that come after us : A Precedent, Sir, that will be an eternal Reproach upon this Session of Parliament, and a Precedent that our latest Posterity will have Cause to complain of.

Mr Clayton.

Hereupon Mr Clayton said,
Sir,

‘ I shall take Notice only of one thing relating to the Debate. It is well known, that upon the Death of every King, all those Duties which had been granted for the Support of the Civil List, expired of Course, and are in the Case as if no such Duties had ever been granted ; and yet the very first Parlia-

Parliament next after the Accession of a Successor, those very Duties are all revived, and are settled upon the Successor, for his Life, by a general Bill : It is no way thought necessary to bring in a particular Bill for every Duty that is then to be revived. This, Sir, is an Argument for the present Method of Proceeding, to which I defy any Man to give a sufficient Answer.

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Upon this Mr Walter Plumer stood up, and said,
Sir,

Mr Plumer.

‘ From this very Debate it appears plain to me, that we are in some doubt, whether we are regular in our present Method of Proceeding or not ; I am persuaded that if there was no Doubt in the Case, if there were no plausible Reason for suspecting the Regularity and Order of our Proceedings as to the Bill now before us, the Right Honourable Member on the Floor would not have taken so much Pains to explain the Case to us ; and I must think, Sir, that in an Affair of so great Consequence, an Affair of as great Consequence as any that ever did, or ever can come before this House, the least Doubt as to the Regularity of our Proceedings, the least Suspicion of our being got into any Method contrary to the ancient Orders of this House, ought to be a sufficient and a prevailing Argument for the withdrawing of this Bill, and for our resuming the Consideration of this Affair in the Committee of Ways and Means. It is no Scandal, Sir, for us, or for any Man to own that he has been in a Mistake ; the wisest Men are not infallible ; but for Men to persist in a Mistake, after it is discovered, or even after they begin to doubt whether they are in a Mistake or no, does not favour much of Wisdom, more especially in an Affair which may be so easily rectified. This Session of Parliament must continue sitting for some considerable Time as yet ; and as we have Time enough, I can see no Reason why this Affair may not be brought again before the Committee of Ways and Means, where all Mistakes, if any be, may be corrected, and even all future Doubts or Disputes, as to Regularity and Method, may be obviated.

‘ As to what the worthy Member who spoke last observed about the Civil List Duties, it must be granted, that they expire at the Death of every King ; and, Sir, it must likewise be granted, that since the first Establishment of such Duties, they have all been most punctually revived by the very first Parliament after the Accession of the next Successor. But in what manner ? Why, Sir, by the House’s taking them one by one under Consideration in a Committee, and coming to a particular Resolution as to every one : Then indeed one

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general Bill is ordered to be brought in, in Pursuance of all these particular Resolutions : But is not this, Sir, a Method of Proceeding quite different from the Method we are now in ? If those Civil List Duties had ever been revived by a general Resolution, and a great many expired or repealed Penal Laws, relating to the Collecting of them, revived by a general Reference in the new Bill, without being mentioned in the Resolution of the Committee, then an Argument might have been from thence drawn for the Regularity of our present Method of Proceeding ; but as there never was any such thing pretended to be done in the reviving of those Civil List Duties, I am of Opinion, that the usual Method of Proceeding with respect to the Revival of them, is a very strong Argument against the Regularity of the Method we are now in, with respect to this favourite Scheme of reviving the Duties upon Salt. And thus, Sir, I hope, I have given a sufficient Answer to the Argument made use of by the Gentleman who spoke last. But, Sir, as to the Duty itself, I am surprized that there should be any farther Dispute about it, for it really appears to me, that every Man in this House is against it : Even of those who at first seemed to be for it some have since acknowledged, that it will be an intolerable Grievance upon the People in Scotland ; and the rest have acknowledged, that it will be liable to a great many Frauds : Sir, I cannot think that any Man, who thinks this Duty an intolerable Grievance upon Scotland, will be for reviving it ; and we have so many fraudulent Practices already in this Kingdom, that I cannot think any Man will be for reviving a Duty which he thinks will increase them. At this rate, Sir, I cannot really perceive that any Man in this House is for the Duty ; why therefore should we dispute any longer about the Method of reviving this Duty, since every Man, that has spoke in the Debate, has given a good Reason for his being against the Duty itself ?

The Salt-Bill, having been read a second Time, is committed.

This Debate being over, the Bill was read a second Time, and a Motion being made for the committing thereof, and the Question being put, it was carried in the Affirmative, by 209 against 154 ; and it was resolved, That the House would resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, upon the said Bill, on the 8th Instant.

March 7. Mr Rolle presented, according to Order, a Bill, for amending and making more effectual an Act made in the 9th Year of the Reign of Queen Anne, intituled, *An Act for securing the Freedom of Parliaments, by the farther Qualifying the Members to sit in the House of Commons ;* which was read the first Time, and order'd to be read a second Time.

A Bill, For securing the Freedom of Parliaments read the first Time.

The same Day two Bills were brought in, relating to George Robinson and John Thompson, pursuant to an Order of the 25th of February, which were both read twice and committed : It was also ordered, That the Committee do make the said two Bills into one.

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The Bills relating to George Robinson and John Thompson committed.

March 8. After the Order of the Day was read, for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House on the Salt-Bill, it was moved and ordered, without any Division, That it should be an Instruction to the said Committee, that they should have Power to receive a Clause of Credit. Then the Country Party moved, 'That it should be an Instruction to the said Committee, that they should have Power to receive a Clause to restrain any Person, during the Time he shall be concerned or employed in the charging, collecting, levying, or managing any of the Duties to be granted by the said Bill, from being a Returning Officer, or voting, or influencing any Elector to vote, in Elections of Members to serve in Parliament,' which passed in the Negative. Then it was mov'd, 'That it should be an Instruction to the said Committee, that they should have Power to receive a Clause, to exempt from the Duties to be laid by the said Bill, all home-made Salt used in victualling Ships, which having likewise a Negative put upon it, the Country Party moved again, 'That it should be an Instruction to the said Committee, that they should have Power to receive a Clause, that the Potters might be allowed a Draw-back of the Duty upon all Salt used in glazing their Earthen-Ware : ' And also, 'That it should be an Instruction to the said Committee, that they should have Power to receive a Clause, that Salt used for manuring of Land should be exempt from the Duties to be laid by the said Bill.' Likewise, 'That it should be an Instruction to the said Committee, that they should have Power to receive a Clause to fix the Assize of all Salt, which should be sold before the Duties laid by the said Bill should take Place.' All these Motions met with the same Fate with the former, but it was ordered, 'That the Committee should have Power to receive a Clause to make void all Bargains then subsisting for the Delivery of Salt at any future Time. Then the House resolv'd itself into the said Committee ; and Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair : After which it was resolv'd, 'That the House should again resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, on the 10th, to consider farther of the said Bill.

The House, in a Grand Committee, proceed farther on the Salt-Bill.

Debate concerning several additional Clauses, and other Amendments to the said Bill.

March 10. The above Order being read, a Motion was made, 'That it should be an Instruction to the said Committee, that they should have a Power to receive a Clause to exempt from the Duties, to be laid by the said Bill, Salt

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used in dressing and curing of Leather: And also, 'That it should be an Instruction to the said Committee, to exempt from the Duties, to be laid by the said Bill, Salt used in making Glafs and Glafs Bottles;' but the Question being put upon both these Motions, it was carried in the Negative. Then it was ordered, without a Division, That the Committee should have Power to receive a Clause, for allowing Fish cured with Scots Salt to be brought from Scotland into England, the Person or Persons, who shall bring the same, paying such Duties upon bringing in such Fish, at the Port it is brought to, as, added to the Duty payable upon Salt made in Scotland, should amount to the full Duty payable in England, for the Quantity of Salt necessary for curing such Fish. After this the House resolved itself into the said Committee, and went through the Bill, and the Speaker having resumed the Chair, the Report was ordered to be receiv'd on the 20th.

The Bill relating to George Robinson, and J. Thompson pass'd, and sent to the Lords.

March 13. The Bill against George Robinson and John Thompson was read a third Time, and sent up to the Lords, where it pass'd very speedily, and on the 20th Instant had the Royal Assent.

The Sugar-Colony Bill read the third Time, pass'd, and sent to the Lords, where it is lost.

March 15. The Sugar-Colony Bill was read the third Time, and pass'd, and Mr Winnington was order'd to carry it up to the Lords, where it was dropt as it had been in the preceding Session.

The Salt-Bill read the Third Time, and pass'd.

March 21. The Salt-Bill was read the third Time, and a Motion being made that the same do pass, and the Question being put thereupon, it was carried in the Affirmative, by 207 against 135.

Lord Gage presents a Report from the Committee relating to the Earl of Derwentwater's Estate; which is order'd to be printed.

March 22. Lord Gage reported from the Committee appointed to inquire into the fraudulent Sale of the late Earl of Derwentwater's Estate, that they had examin'd the Books, Papers, &c. referr'd to them, and had agreed upon a Report, with an Appendix, which he read in his Place. Then it was order'd, That the said Report and Appendix be printed.

The Bill, For securing the Freedom of Parliaments, read the Third Time, and thrown out.

March 23. The Bill, *For the better securing the Freedom of Parliaments, by farther Qualifying Members to sit in the House of Commons*, was read the third Time, and the Question being put, that the Bill do pass, it was carried in the Negative, by 66 Votes against 60.

Motion for a Committee to inquire, if any Member sits, contrary to Law.

Then a Motion was made, That a Committee be appointed to inquire, whether any Member of that House did sit in the House contrary to Law; but the Question being put, it passed in the Negative, by 83 Votes against 37.

March, 30. The Report presented by the Lord Gage on the 22d Instant, was read, and taken into Consideration, whereupon it was resolved, *Nem. Con.* I. That on the 30th

of July, 1723, Matthew White, Esq; was declared the Purchaser of an Annuity of 200 l. during the Life of Charles Ratcliffe, issuing out of the Estate of James late Earl of Derwentwater, with all the Arrears thereof from his Attainder, for 1201 l. 1 s. without due Notice of Time or Place for exposing such Annuity to Sale, and without the Presence of a sufficient Number of Commissioners and Trustees, as required by the Act appointing such Commissioners and Trustees. II. That William Smith, Esq; did on the 11th Day of July 1723, for the Consideration of 1060 l. contract for an Estate of James late Earl of Derwentwater, mentioned, in a Particular published by the said Commissioners and Trustees, to be of the annual Value of 5013 l. subject to the Annuities and Incumbrances in the said Particular mentioned, and to be sold during the Continuance of an Estate in Tail-Male, vested in Charles Ratcliffe in Remainder, Expectant on the Death of John Ratcliffe under Age, and without Issue-Male, which Contract was, on the 30th of the same July, vacated and torn out of the Book of Contracts, and a new one then procured and dated as on the 11th, by which the said William Smith not only obtained the said Remainder in Tail, but also the Reversion in Fee of the said Estate for the same Sum of 1060 l. although a sufficient Number of Commissioners and Trustees, as required by Act of Parliament, was not present either on the 11th or 30th of the said July, nor had any Notice been given of exposing to Sale the Reversion in Fee of the said Estate. III. That Matthew White and William Smith, Esqs; were present on the 30th of the said July, when Samuel Allen, Secretary to the said Commissioners and Trustees, signed the Names of Sir Thomas Hales and Sir John Eyles to the respective pretended Contracts, made with the said White and Smith on the said 30th of July, when no Commissioner and Trustee, but Dennis Bond, Esq; and John Birch, Serjeant at Law, were present. IV. That the contracting for the Sale of the aforesaid Estates, by a less Number of the Commissioners and Trustees than Four, and the not giving Fifteen Days Notice at least of such Sales, was a manifest Violation of the Act of Parliament for the Sale of the said Estates, highly injurious to the Publick, and a notorious Breach of the Trust reposed in such Commissioners and Trustees.

Upon these Resolutions it was ordered, That Leave should be given to bring in a Bill to declare and make void the several Contracts, and the Conveyances made in Pursuance thereof, of the Estate of James late Earl of Derwentwater, to William Smith, Esq; and also of the Annuity of 200 l. during

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Report relating to the fraudulent Sale of the Earl of Derwentwater's Estate, taken into Consideration.

Resolutions thereupon, with regard to M. White and W. Smith, the Purchasers.

A Bill order'd for making void the said Sale.

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The House resolve
that a Commissioner
of the forfeited
Estates, suffering
the Secretary to
sign the Name of
an absent Commis-
sioner, is guilty of
a Breach of Trust.

Debate concerning
an absent Commis-
sioner, suffering
the Secretary to
sign for him.

Dennis Bond, Esq;
and Serj. Birch ex-
pell'd the House.

Sir John Eyles vot-
ed guilty of an Ir-
regularity; and
order'd to be re-
primanded by Mr
Speaker.

ing the Life of Charles Ratcliffe, with the Arrears thereof;
to Matthew White, Esq;

After this the House resolved, *Nem. Con.* That any
Commissioner and Trustee, appointed by the said Act of
Parliament, directing or permitting the Secretary of the Com-
mission, or any other Person, to sign the Name of any ab-
sent Commissioner and Trustee; in order to make up the
Number of Commissioners and Trustees required by the said
Act, to any Sale, Contract, or other Proceedings, was guilty
of a Violation of the said Act, and of an high Breach
of Trust.

Then a Motion was made to resolve, That any ab-
sent Commissioner and Trustee appointed by the said Act of
Parliament, empowering any Person to sign his Name for
him, in order to make up the Number of Commissioners
and Trustees required by the said Act, to Matters of Form
in Proceedings under the said Act, was guilty of a great Ir-
regularity in the Execution of the said Act: But many Mem-
bers being of Opinion, That it was as great a Violation of
the Act, and as high a Breach of Trust, for any absent Com-
missioner to empower any Person to sign his Name for him;
in order to make up the Number of Commissioners required,
as it was for any Commissioner present to direct or permit
any other Person to sign the Name of any absent Commis-
sioner, in order to make up the Number of Commissioners pre-
sent; the said Motion was warmly oppos'd: However, after
a long Debate, the Question was put, and it was carried for
the Motion, by 175 Votes against 140.

That Part of the Committee's Report, which related
to Dennis Bond, Esq; Member for Poole, being read, it
was resolv'd, That he was guilty of a notorious Breach of
Trust, as a Commissioner for Sale of the forfeited Estates,
and that he be for the said Offence expell'd the House.
The same Resolutions were made with regard to Serjeant
Birch, Member for Weobly, and he was also expell'd the
House.

Then that Part of the Report which related to Sir John
Eyles, Member for London, was read, and the Recital of a
Conveyance enter'd in a Book belonging to the said Com-
missioners and Trustees was read; then it was resolved,
That he was guilty of a great Irregularity as a Commis-
sioner and Trustee for Sale of the forfeited Estates for the Use
of the Publick, by empowering Mr Samuel Allen, Secreta-
ry of the Commissioners and Trustees for the Sale of the
said Estate, to sign his the said Sir John Eyles's Name, when
absent, in order to make up the Number of Commissioners
and Trustees required by Act of Parliament, to Matters of

Form

Form in Proceedings under the said Act. And it was order'd, That he should for his said Offence be reprimanded in his Place by the Speaker, and that he should attend the House in his Place the next Morning.

March 31. The Speaker reprimanded Sir John Eyles, as follows :

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Sir John Eyles,

THE House have come to a Resolution, that you are guilty of a great Irregularity, as a Commissioner and Trustee for Sale of the Forfeited Estates for the Use of the Publick, by empowering Mr Samuel Allen, Secretary of the Commissioners and Trustees for the Sale of the said Estates, to sign your Name, when absent, in order to make up the Number of Commissioners and Trustees required by Act of Parliament, to Matters of Form, in Proceedings under the said Act.

The Speaker's Reprimand to Sir John Eyles.

And have imposed a Command upon me, which is the only one, I can truly say, that I ever received with any Uneasiness in the Place I now sit ; not from any Doubt of the Justice of the Command, nor from any Unwillingness in me to obey an Order of the House ; but because you, Sir, are unfortunately the Subject of it, for whom I have always had the greatest Personal Regard.

The Offence you are guilty of having come within the Notice of the House, it was impossible it should escape their Censure, as it had a Reference to a Trust reposed in you ; reposed by Parliament ! the highest and most sacred Authority any Subject of this Kingdom can act under ! and with a particular Confidence in you, and the others join'd with you, because of the Relation you bore to the Parliament : A Trust of great Importance, and which required great Pains and Attention to it, and for that a very considerable Recompence was assigned to you out of the publick Treasure. The Recompence, Sir, you enjoy'd ; but the Pains and Attention expected from you, you fail'd in, and illegally delegated your Trust, in Instances where a false and fraudulent Use has been made of it.

But, happy for you, Sir, it appears to the House to have been a Matter rather of evil Example, than evil Intention in you ; for which Reason, the Resolutions of the House, on this Occasion, have a Mixture of Justice and Mercy ; and as your Offence will always justify the Censure of the House upon you, let it be your Care, Sir, that your future Behaviour always justify the Lenity of the House to you. Let the Justice of the House make you fear, and the Clemency of the House make it a Matter of Sorrow in you to offend again.

This Sense, I persuade myself, you have of the Judgment the House has pass'd upon you ; which is, That I reprimand

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mand you for your said Offence, and I do reprimand you accordingly.

To this Sir John Eyles made the following Reply ;

Mr Speaker,

Sir John Eyles's
Reply.

‘ I Am very much ashamed of an Offence that has drawn upon me the Animadversions and Censure of this House ; an Offence, which at the Time of committing it, I had scarce any Idea of being subject to blame for. I am now made truly sensible of it, and the strong and lively Colours in which you, Sir, have drawn it, will be to me a lasting Memento of future Caution.

‘ The Judgment the House has passed upon me I endure with a dutiful Submission ; and you, Sir, having shewn that Tendernefs and Humanity, which is agreeable to your Nature, in pronouncing it, and thereby, in some Degree, abated its Rigour ; I cannot but express my grateful and sincere Acknowledgment to yourself, and also to the House, for their Favour in not carrying this Censure to any farther Consequence.’

The Thanks of the House given to Lord Gage for his Management in the Affair of the Charitable Corporation.

The Lord Gage, Chairman of the Committee appointed to inquire into the fraudulent Sale of Lord Derwentwater's Estate, having taken a great deal of Pains in that Affair, it was resolv'd, *Nem. Con.* That the Thanks of this House be given to his Lordship for the great Service he had thereby done the Publick. Then it was order'd, That the Report of the said Committee be printed.

Farther Debate concerning Robinson and Thompson.

April 3. The Affair of George Robinson and John Thompson occasioned a new Debate, for the Day being then passed, on which Robinson and Thompson were to appear by the Act before-mentioned, [See p. 221.] and neither of them, but particularly Robinson, not having appeared or surrendered himself in the Terms of the said Act ; it was moved, That he might be expelled : But some of the Members took Notice, ‘ That by the said Act, he might within the Time limited surrender himself to either House of Parliament ; and though he had not surrendered to that House, yet they did not know but that he had surrendered himself to the other ; and therefore they moved, That a Committee should be appointed to inspect the Journals of the Lords, and to report to that House, whether any and what Proceedings had been before the Lords in Consequence of an Act passed that Session, intitled, *An Act to encourage and compel George Robinson, Esq; and John Thompson to appear, &c.* But to this it was answered, ‘ That according to the Terms of the said Act, the said Robinson might have surrendered himself to the other House,

House, and might thereby have freed himself from the Pains, to which he was by the said Act subjected, in case of his not appearing and surrendering; but this they had nothing to do with, when they came to consider whether or no he ought to be expell'd; because in that Question, the only Point to be consider'd of was, whether or no he had attended the Service of the House according to Order; if he had, it would appear by his answering for himself in his Place, or by some Member's rising up and making an Excuse for him; if he had not, he was guilty of a high Contempt of the Orders and Authority of that House, for which he ought to be expelled; and that therefore they had not in the present Question any Business with the Journals of the other House.' At last the Question was put upon this Motion, and it was carried in the Negative. Then the House came to a Resolution, *Nem. Con.* That George Robinson, Esq; having been charged in Parliament with being privy to, and concerned in many indirect and fraudulent Practices, in the Management of the Affairs of the Charitable Corporation for Relief of industrious Poor, by assisting them with small Sums upon Pledges at legal Interest; and with having got into his Hands very large Sums of Money belonging to the said Corporation; and being returned a Burgess to serve in this present Parliament for the Borough of Great Marlow, in the County of Bucks, and having never attended the Service of the House, although required so to do, was guilty of a high Contempt of the Orders and Authority of the House. Then it was likewise resolved, *Nem. Con.* That the said George Robinson, Esq; should be for his said Offence expelled the House: And Mr Speaker was ordered to issue his Warrant for making out a new Writ for the said Borough of Marlow, in his Place.

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George Robinson Esq; expelled the House on account of the Charitable Corporation.

The same Day the House resolv'd itself into a Committee of the whole House, to consider farther of the Supply; and the Estimates of the several Sums of Money due to the King of Denmark, by virtue of his late Majesty's Declaration to that Purpose, for the Agio or Difference of the Subsidies payable to the Crown of Denmark, in pursuance of the Treaty between his late Britannick Majesty, the most Christian King, and the King of Denmark, dated the 16th of April 1727, together with several other Papers relating to that Affair, were referred to the said Committee. Then a Motion being made, That the Sum of 22,694l. 7s. 6d. be granted to make good the said Agio or Difference; the same was warmly opposed by several Members, but at last the Question being put, it was carried in the Affirmative.

22,694l. 7s. 6d. granted to the King of Denmark, to make good the Agio or Difference, in 1727.

April 4. The above Resolution being reported to the House, a Motion was made that the House do agree with
V o l. II. H h the

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1732.

The Bill for making void the Sale of the Earl of Derwentwater's Estate read the first Time.

Petition of W. Smith and M. White against it.

Motion that the Witnesses to be examin'd at the second Reading of the said Bill, be examined upon Oath.

the Committee, which after some Debate, was carried in the Affirmative, by 216 Votes against 104.

April 6. Lord Gage presented to the House, a Bill, *For making void the several Contracts for Sale of the late Earl of Derwentwater's Estate*, which was read the first Time, and order'd to be read a second Time.

April 17. A Petition of William Smith, Esq; and Matthew White, Esq; was presented to the House, and read; praying to be heard by their Council against the said Bill, which Petitions were ordered to lie upon the Table till the second Reading thereof; and that the Petitioners might be then severally heard by their Counsel: Hereupon a Motion was made, That the Witnesses, who were to be examined for and against the said Bill at the second Reading thereof, should be examined in the most solemn Manner. This occasioned a long Debate in the House. Those that were against the Question represented, 'That the House of Lords had always insisted upon it, that the House of Commons, being no Court of Judicature, had not therefore a Power to examine Witnesses in the most solemn Manner, at the Bar of their House: That though this Power had always been claimed and insisted upon by the House of Commons, yet it was a Point still in Dispute between the two Houses: And that if the House of Commons should upon that Occasion make use of this disputed Power, it would occasion a Breach between the two Houses, which might not only prove to be the Loss of the Bill then under Consideration, but might be of much worse Consequence, by putting a full Stop to all the publick Business of the Nation; it being well known, that whenever any Breach happened between the two Houses, it proved always to be a very difficult and tedious Matter to re-establish that Harmony, which ought always to subsist between the two Houses, and without which the publick Affairs of the Nation cannot be carried on; so that their coming to any such Resolution might intirely unninge the Government, and throw the whole Kingdom into Confusion.'

Those Members upon the other hand, who were for the Question, declared the great Regard and Concern they had for the Bill then under Consideration, and for the publick Peace and Quiet of the Nation; but said, 'That the true Method of preserving the publick Quiet of the Nation was, for each House to take care to preserve those Powers and Privileges which properly belong to them; for if that House should begin to yield up, or not exert a Power which they had always enjoyed, only because the other House pretended to dispute their having any such Power, they might come at last to be stript of all the Powers and Privileges they ever had or could pretend to: That it was well known, that the

House

House of Commons had always been used to empower their Committees to examine Witnesses before them in the most solemn Manner; and it was very odd to pretend, that the House itself could not make use of that Power which they every Day delegated to their Committees; it was not to be presumed, that the other House would raise any such groundless Dispute: That it might perhaps be pretended, that as the House of Commons was no Court of Judicature, they could not therefore administer an Oath; but that was not now to be brought into Question, because they might get such of the Members as were Justices of the Peace to administer the Oath to the Witnesses, upon which Oath the Witnesses might afterwards be examined at the Bar of the House; or they might get one of the Judges to come to the Speaker's Chamber to administer the Oath to the Witnesses, which was no new or unheard-of Method of Proceeding; for that there was upon their Journals a Precedent for the same, and that Method was then allowed of by the other House without any Dispute: That even as to their having a Power of administering an Oath in the most solemn Manner, they hoped that there was no Member of that House who doubted thereof; and if it were to be brought into Dispute, it could be proved to the Conviction of all impartial Men: That the House of Commons was certainly a Court of Record, their being such having been admitted of by the other House in the most solemn Manner, as appeared by the 6th of Henry VIII. Chap. 16. By which it was enacted, ' That no Knight, &c. ' should depart from the Parliament without the Licence of ' the Speaker and Commons in Parliament assembled, to be ' entered upon Record, in the Clerk of the Parliament's ' Book, on pain to lose their Wages.' That this was an indisputable Testimony of their being a Court of Record, and as such they certainly had a Power to administer an Oath in any Affair which came properly before them, and upon which it was necessary that Witnesses should be examined: That as there was a Precedent for examining Witnesses in the most solemn Manner at the Bar of their House, without bringing their Power of administering of Oaths into Dispute, if the present Question was agreed to, they might follow that Precedent, and thereby prevent all Occasion of Difference between the two Houses.'

Then the previous Question being put, That the Question be now put upon the said Motion, it passed in the Negative. The Majority of the House, being desirous to have the Bill pass'd, were unwilling to agree to any Motion that might create a Difference between the two Houses, and thereby hazard the Loss of the Bill.

Anno 5. Geo. II.

1732.

Which passes in the Negative.

Anno 5. Geo. II.

1732.

The Report from the Committee on the Charitable Corporation order'd to be printed.

The Bill for vacating the Sale of *Ld Derwentwater's Estate* read a second Time, and committed.

Sir Robert Sutton and Sir Archibald Grant explain'd the House on account of the Charitable Corporation.

Motion to resolve, That Sir R. Sutton, Sir A. Grant, D. Bond, W. Burroughs, G. Jackson, B. Robinson, W. Squire, G. Robinson, J. Thompson, R. Wooley, and T. Warren, having been guilty of a Breach of Trust, and other fraudulent Practices in the Management of the Charitable Corporation, ought to make a just Satisfaction to the Sufferers.

Debate thereon.

Mr Shippen's Motion on that Question.

April 20. Mr Sandys presented to the House a farther Report from the Committee appointed to inquire into the Charitable Corporation, which, with an Appendix, he read in his Place, and the same was order'd to be printed: To this therefore, which may be found in the *POLITICAL STATE* for December 1732, we refer the inquisitive Reader for the tedious Particulars of this iniquitous Trans-action.

April 21. The Bill for making void the Sale of the late Earl of Derwentwater's Estate was read a second Time, and the Counsel heard for and against it.

April 24. The said Bill was, without any Opposition, committed to a Committee of the whole House.

May 4. Upon the farther Hearing of the Report, made by the Committee appointed to inquire into the Affair of the Charitable Corporation, which had been several Days under Consideration, Sir Robert Sutton and Sir Archibald Grant were expelled the House.

May 8. The House resumed again the Consideration of the said Report, and a Motion was made to resolve, That Sir Robert Sutton and Sir Archibald Grant, Dennis Bond, Esq; (who had been expelled this Session, on account of the fraudulent Sale of Lord Derwentwater's Estate, *See p. 238.*) William Burroughs, Esq; George Jackson, Benjamin Robinson, William Squire, George Robinson, John Thompson, Richard Wooley, and Thomas Warren, having been guilty of many notorious Breaches of Trust, and many indirect and fraudulent Practices in the Direction and Management of the Affairs of the Charitable Corporation, and having thereby occasioned great Losses to many of his Majesty's Subjects, ought to make a just Satisfaction for the same: But some Members were for leaving out the Words, *ought to make a just Satisfaction for the same*; hereupon Mr Shippen stood up, and spoke as follows:

Mr Speaker,

'The House is extremely obliged to the honourable Gentlemen of the Committee, for the great Pains they have taken, and for the great Skill they have shewn, in detecting a dark and execrable Scene of Villainy: And surely we ought not to entertain any Proposition which comes from them, in consequence of their Inquiry and of our own Proceedings, with Jealousy and Distrust.

'I can therefore by no Means agree with those Gentlemen, who suspect that there is some latent and disguised Meaning in the Question before us, and who are for leaving out the latter Part of it; because I think no Question was ever framed with more Candour, or conceived in more clear and intelligible

intelligible Terms, than this is ; and the latter Part is so far from being exceptionable or superfluous, that it is the necessary, the natural Conclusion from the Premises contained in the first Part : For since the Persons named have been lately voted guilty of the Crimes, with which they stand charged in the Report of our Committee, what is the next Step we are to take, but to vote some Punishment ? and what Punishment so mild with regard to the Offenders, or so just with regard to the Sufferers as Restitution ?

‘ Let us take the whole Question together, and we shall judge best of the Propriety and Coherence of its several Clauses. It runs thus, viz. ‘ That Sir Robert Sutton, &c. ‘ having been guilty of many notorious Breaches of Trust, and ‘ many indirect and fraudulent Practices, in the Direction and ‘ Management of the Affairs of the Charitable Corporation ‘ for Relief of Industrious Poor, by assisting them with small ‘ Sums upon Pledges at legal Interest ; and having thereby ‘ occasioned great Losses to many of his Majesty’s Subjects, ‘ ought to make a just Satisfaction for the same.’

‘ Now, as I have already said, no Question was ever conceived in more clear and intelligible Terms than this is ; and I am at a Loss to comprehend, why Gentlemen should dislike any Expressions in it, especially, why the ingenious Lord, and the worthy Person his Second, should object to the Words, *Just Satisfaction*. For certainly they cannot imagine that these Words will be declared unintelligible in this House, where the Nature and Meaning of Justice is supposed to be perfectly well understood, as it is or ought to be the Rule and Measure of all our Determinations ; and they must forgive me, if I think no Dutch Commentator ever mistook the Sense of an Author more grossly, than they have mistaken the Sense of this Question.

‘ But what is most remarkable in this Debate is the Impatience some Gentlemen express to know, whether the Advocates for the Question intend to proceed against the Offenders by Impeachment or by Bill ; and they seem to demand that we should immediately come to a Resolution.

‘ Whence can this Impatience arise ? If it arises from Compassion, why were these very Gentlemen, who now interpose, silent ? Why did they suffer the Objects of their Compassion to be unanimously censured, when they had made but an insufficient Defence for themselves, and wanted the Aid of their Eloquence ? If it arises from Curiosity, I think it ought rather to be kept in Suspence than gratified, because it is unreasonable and irregular. If it arises from the Fears and Apprehensions of particular Persons ; why should others, who are under no such Anxiety, be obliged to remove these,

Anno 5. Geo. II.
1732.

those Fears and Apprehensions, especially when it is impossible for them to know how well they may be grounded.

‘ Since then no good Reason appears to justify this extraordinary Demand ; since this Question is only declarative of our present Disposition to do Justice, and to give Satisfaction to the injured and distressed Proprietors, methinks there should be no Difficulty in passing it : For we shall be as much at Liberty, after we have passed it, as we are before, to choose that Method of Proceeding, which shall be thought most proper, when we are sufficiently prepared for a final Decision.

‘ What has been said, concerning the Difference betwixt Impeachments and Bills of Attainder, is foreign to our present Point; and might have been spared in an Audience, where that Argument hath been so fully and frequently discussed, at the End of almost every Administration.

‘ We all know, that Impeachments are the ancient Parliamentary Method of bringing Publick Criminals to Publick Justice, and it is the Method we ought to pursue on common and ordinary Occasions. Not but that it is liable to many Difficulties, to the Tedioufness and Perplexity of Forms, to the Caprice of the House of Lords, by which means Justice hath very often been delayed, and sometimes entirely defeated.

‘ We all know too, that Bills of Attainder are the utmost Stretch, and the terrible Part of Parliamentary Power, which ought never to be exerted, but in the most heinous and most flagrant Instances. I have always considered them as such : My Aversion is sufficiently known by my constant Opposition to them ; and I envy no Man the Glory of having carried Bills of Pains and Penalties through this House, by being Prosecutor, Judge, Juryman, and even Evidence in the same Cause.

‘ But should it happen in our Day, that an overgrown unweildy Minister of State should tumble from the Height of his Power, and fall under the Censure of this House, for protecting Fraud, and patronizing Corruption : A Minister, Sir, who may have made such Bills, as are now dreaded, the Instruments of his personal Vengeance, and the Support of his cruel Administration ; perhaps the Voice of an injured and oppressed Nation, crying aloud for Justice, and demanding speedy and exemplary Punishment, may then prevail over Gentlemen’s natural Inclinations, and force them to comply with what they would otherwise decline and disapprove ; nor could the Criminal himself, with any Appearance of Modesty, or Colour of Reason, complain ; for *Lex Talionis* would at least be *Argumentum ad Hominem*, and the

the World would universally allow, that it would be a righteous Judgment, for *Necis Artifices Arte perire suâ*. But we shall have a better Opportunity of explaining ourselves, and delivering our Sentiments at large, if the Case which I here only suppose, should ever come actually before us, and undergo a Parliamentary Examination.

Anno 5. Geo. II.
1732.

‘ I should apologize for this Digression, had not the Course of the Debate led me into it, and made it necessary to say something on these Heads: But I shall conclude with returning to the Question, and humbly offering my Opinion, that we ought to assure the Proprietors we will assist them in a future Session, tho’ we cannot in this, to repair the excessive Losses they have sustained by the Frauds and Iniquities of their Directors, as far as lies within the Reach of this Part of the Legislature.

‘ I hope too we shall not only concur with the honourable Gentlemen of the Committee in their Proposition, but give them the Thanks of the House for the Honour and Integrity, with which they have acquitted themselves in the publick Service.’

After this the Motion as above pass’d into a Resolution: Then it was order’d, That Leave be given to bring in a Bill, to restrain all the said Persons, (except William Squire, George Robinson, and John Thompson, who were absconded) from going out of the Kingdom for one Year, and till the End of the then next Session of Parliament; and for discovering their Estate and Effects; and for preventing the transporting or alienating the same. As to William Squire, the Members, appointed to prepare and bring in the said Bill, were order’d to insert a Clause, for obliging him to surrender himself at a Time and Place to be mentioned in the Bill; to give Security for his not going out of the Kingdom for one Year; for discovering his Estate; and for preventing the transporting or alienating the same. It was also order’d, That Leave be given to bring in a Bill, for the Relief of the Sufferers in the Charitable Corporation.

The above Motion agreed to.

Two Bills were accordingly brought in, and pass’d both Houses, but the Lords struck the Name of George Jackson and Benjamin Robinson out of the Bill.

Two Bills pass’d in pursuance of that Resolution.

G. Jackson and B. Robinson struck out of the Bill by the Lords.

May 16. Mr Sandys acquainted the House, that Sir Robert Sutton had come to him that Morning, and told him, that he had received a Letter from a Correspondent of his at Paris, in which was inclosed a Letter from Signor Belloni, a Banker at Rome, directed to the Committee to whom the Petition of the Proprietors of the Charitable Corporation was referred, or in case the said Committee did not subsist, to Sir Robert Sutton and others, acquainting them, that the said Belloni had procured John Thompson, late Warehouse-

Mr Sandys reports from the Committee on the Charitable Corporation, that Signor Belloni had wrote to them from Rome, that John Thompson was detain’d Prisoner there.

Keeper

Anno 5. Geo. II.
1732.

Signor Belloni's
Letter order'd to
be translated.

Keeper to the said Corporation, to be secured a Prisoner in the Castle of St Angelo at Rome: Hereupon the said Committee was ordered to be revived.

May 22. Mr Sandys made a farther Report from the above Committee, and thereupon it was order'd, That the several Letters and Papers mentioned in the said Report should be laid before the House. Then it was referred to a Committee to translate Signor Belloni's Letter.

May 23. The Lord Hervey presented the Translation of that Letter, as follows:

Rome, May 4, 1732.

Gentlemen,

Signor Belloni's
Letter.

IT is with great Pleasure that I lay hold of this Occasion, which now offers, to shew my Esteem and my Affection for the English Nation, by contributing to the Advantage of many private Persons in that Kingdom, and consequently to the Satisfaction of the Parliament, and the Nation itself.

As the Frauds, that have been committed in the Management of the Charitable Corporation, have made a great Noise every where, People here have been sensibly touched with the Misfortunes these Frauds have occasioned, and have felt the Interest the Nation had to redress them, which could not be effected, but by seizing the Person and the Papers, the Books and the Effects of Mr Thompson, which the Parliament had not yet been able to compass.

To this End having received Advice. that the said Thompson might come to Rome under some borrow'd Name, the necessary Measures were taken to put him under an Arrest upon his Arrival there, which have been put in Execution; at the same Time his Papers, Letters he has received from England since his Departure from thence, Copies of Letters he has written to his Confidants, and Notes of his most secret Affairs have been seized: He himself is at present in the Castle of St Angelo, and has by this Means been put under a Sort of Necessity to discover the whole Mystery of this Affair; which he has amply done, by discovering not only the Books and Effects of the Corporation, but also his own.

This being done, I have been ordered to communicate this important Discovery to whom and where it may be proper, for the Good and Advantage of the Nation; wherefore I dispatched without Delay a Courier to one of my Correspondents at Paris, with all the Papers relating to this Affair, that he may find the Means to have them put into your Hands.

But as Equity requires, that the Proprietors of the Charitable Corporation, who will reap so great an Advantage
from

from this Discovery, should yield to certain Conditions before the Papers and Writings be delivered to you; I have ordered my Correspondent to insist on these Conditions being previously agreed to, and in the mean Time to look on these Papers, as a simple Deposit in his Hands not to be parted with till this be done; and I doubt not, but this Precaution, as well as the Conditions, will appear just and reasonable to all those who are interested in this Affair.

Anno 5. Geo. II.

1732.

Having thus discharged my Commission, there remains nothing, but to beg you will be persuaded of my Respect for the Nation, and of the Desire I shall always have to contribute to its Advantage.

I have the Honour to be, &c.

John-Angelo Belloni:

Then several other Papers being read, the Commons came to two Resolutions, with which the Lords concurr'd, as follows. I. Resolv'd *Nem. Con.* by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons in Parliament assembled, That the Paper dated at Rome, the 4th of May, 1732, N. S. signed John Angelo Belloni, is an insolent and audacious Libel, attempting, by false and insidious Insinuations, to impose upon the Parliament and British Nation; and by specious Pretences, and Professions of Esteem, Affection, and Compassion, to amuse the unhappy Sufferers of the Charitable Corporation, with vain and deceitful Hopes of Relief: That the said Paper is, in itself, absurd and contradictory, conceived, at the beginning, in Terms and in the Style of Power and Authority, or as proceeding from some extraordinary Interest and Influence, but concluding in the Person and Character of a private Banker of Rome; offering, upon certain Conditions, on the behalf of John Thompson, to deliver certain Books and Papers of the said Thompson, the Contents, Value, and Consequence whereof are unknown, without any Offer to surrender the Person of the said Thompson, although represented to have been arrested and detained in safe Custody, from a Sense of the Frauds committed by him, and a due Regard to Justice; the Conditions, demanded and insisted upon by, and in behalf of, the said Thompson, appearing at the same time to be loose, evasive, and uncertain, tending to procure Advantages and Indemnity to himself and his Accomplices, without any Intention or Prospect of Benefit to the Corporation: And that this whole Transaction appears to be a scandalous Artifice, calculated purely to delude the Unhappy, and to disguise and conceal the wicked Practices of the professed Enemies to his Majesty's Person, Crown,

The Commons resolve that Sig. Belloni's Letter is an insolent Libel, with which Resolution the Lords concur.

Anno 5. Geo. II.
1732

It is also order'd
to be burnt by the
common Hang-
man.

An Address for a
farther Representa-
tion of the State
of the American
Colonies;

Also for an Ac-
count of what In-
structions had been
given to the sever-
al Governors of
those Colonies, &c.

The Royal Assent
given to the Bills
relating to the
Earl of Derwent-
water's Estate,
the Charitable
Corporation, &c.

The King's
Speech, & putting
an End to the
Fifth Session,

and Dignity. II. Resolved, That in Abhorrence and De-
testation of this vile Attempt, the said infamous Libel be
burnt by the Hands of the common Hangman, before the
Royal-Exchange in London, upon Friday next, at One of
the Clock: And that the Sheriffs of London do then at-
tend, and cause the same to be burnt there accordingly.

May 25. The House resolv'd, That an Address be pre-
sented to his Majesty to give Directions to the Commissioners
for Trade and Plantations, to prepare a farther Representa-
tion, [See p. 84.] to be laid before the House, in the next
Session of Parliament, of the State of his Majesty's Colonies
and Plantations in America; with respect to any Laws made,
Manufactures set up, or Trade carried on there, which
may affect the Trade, Navigation, and Manufactures of this
Kingdom. It was also resolv'd, That an Address be pre-
sented to his Majesty to give Orders, that the proper Officers
should provide Copies, to be laid before the House, in the
next Session of Parliament, of the several Instructions, which
had been given by her late Majesty, his late Majesty, and
his present Majesty, to the respective Governors of his Co-
lonies in America, relating to the taking, or not taking any
Sums of Money, by way of Present or Salary from the In-
habitants thereof, and when and how the same have at
any Time been varied; and also what Directions had been
given by any of their said Majesties, for the Repair of the
Forts and Fortifications of Barbadoes and the Leeward Islands.

June 1. The King came to the House of Peers, and
gave the Royal Assent to the Bills relating to the Earl of
Derwentwater's Estate, and to the Charitable Corporation,
as also to several other publick and private Bills, after which
his Majesty made the following Speech to both Houses.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ **Y**OU having now dispatched all the Publick Business,
“ that it was practicable for you to go through with at
“ present, and the Season of the Year being so far advanced,
“ I believe it will not be disagreeable to you, that I give you
“ an Opportunity of retiring into the Country, by putting
“ an End to this Session of Parliament.

“ It is unnecessary for me to represent to you the happy
“ State and Situation of Publick Affairs, both at Home and
“ Abroad. You must all be sensible of what is universally
“ seen and felt in the full Enjoyment of a general Peace.
“ The Concurrence of the States General, in the late Treaty
“ of Vienna, has perfected the Establishment of the publick
“ Tranquility, as far as human Prudence can foresee or
“ provide; and a faithful Observance and Execution of the
“ Treaties and Alliances, now subsisting among the several
“ Princes

“ Princes and Powers of Europe, free from groundless Jealousies, and void of all ambitious Views, will be the most effectual Means to continue and preserve these Blessings to us.

Anno 5. Geo. II.
1732.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

“ I return you my Thanks for the Provisions you have made for the Defence and Security of the Kingdom, and for carrying on the Service of the current Year. It is a great Satisfaction to me to see you have turned your Thoughts towards raising the necessary Supplies, by such Methods, as may be the least burthensome to my People : And as this cannot but be received in the Country as a most grateful and acceptable Service, I hope it will encourage you to pursue such Measures for the future, as may on all Occasions render the Supplies, that shall be necessary, as equal and easy as is possible.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ It being necessary for me to visit my German Dominions this Year, I have determined to leave the Queen Regent here during my Absence ; and I doubt not but it will be your Endeavours to make the Government as easy to her, as, I am confident, it will be her Care, by a just and prudent Administration, to deserve your Duty and Regard. I recommend to you all in your several Stations, to study and consult the Preservation of the Peace and Quiet of the Kingdom.”

Then the Lord Chancellor, by his Majesty's Command, prorogued the Parliament to the 27th of July : They were afterwards farther prorog'd to the 16th of January.

The Parliament prorogued.



SPEECHES and DEBATES

IN the SIXTH SESSION of the

First Parliament of King GEORGE II.

ON the 16th of January the King came to the House of Peers, and the Commons attending, his Majesty open'd the Sessions with the following Speech.

Anno 5. Geo. II.
1732-33.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ IT is a great Satisfaction to me, that the present Situation of Affairs, both at Home and Abroad, makes it unnecessary for me to lay before you any other Reasons for

King's Speech at opening the 1732-33 Session.

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

“ my calling you together at this Time ; but the ordinary
“ Dispatch of the Publick Business, and that I may have an
“ Opportunity of receiving your Advice upon such Affairs as
“ may occur to you, and shall require the Care and Con-
“ sideration of Parliament.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

“ I will order the proper Officers to lay before you the
“ Estimates for the Service of the current Year ; and I
“ make no Doubt but that you will, with the same Chear-
“ fulness as I have always experienced in you, effectually
“ raise such Supplies, as you shall judge necessary for the
“ Honour, Safety, and Defence of the Kingdom ; and I
“ cannot but recommend it to you, as a Consideration wor-
“ thy the Commons of Great Britain, that in all your De-
“ liberations, as well upon raising the annual Supplies, as the
“ Distribution of the Publick Revenues, you pursue such
“ Measures as will most conduce to the present and future
“ Ease of those you represent.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ You must be sensible, that it is very desirable to give
“ all possible Dispatch to the Publick Business, and that no-
“ thing can give more Weight and Credit to all your Re-
“ solutions, than to avoid unreasonable Heats and Animosi-
“ ties, and not to suffer yourselves to be diverted, by any
“ specious Pretences, from stedfastly pursuing the true Inte-
“ rest of your Country : Let that be your first and princi-
“ pal Care ; and the People will be sensible of the Benefits
“ they shall receive from your Wisdom and Resolution, in
“ preferring their Ease and the Publick Good to all other
“ Considerations.

The Commons being returned to their House, Mr Speaker reported his Majesty's Speech to both Houses, and the same being read, Mr Henry Bromley, Knight of the Shire for Cambridge, stood up and took Notice, 'That the present profound Tranquility was entirely owing to his Majesty's great Wisdom and Conduct, by which he had surmounted all those Difficulties, which were thrown in his Way by the Enemies of the Nation, and had thereby at last establish'd our Affairs both at Home and Abroad upon a most firm, and he hoped, a lasting Basis : That we ow'd a great many Acknowledgements of Thanks to his Majesty, for his prudent and careful Management of our Affairs both at Home and Abroad, and therefore he would beg Leave to move, That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, to return the Thanks of the House for his most gracious Speech from the Throne ; to express the Satisfaction of the House at the present Situation of Affairs both at Home and Abroad ; and to assure

Mr H. Bromley's
Motion for an Ad-
dress of Thanks.

assure his Majesty, that the House would, with all possible Duty to his Majesty, and just Regard and Concern for those they represented, chearfully and effectually raise such Supplies as should be necessary for the Honour, Safety, and Defence of his Majesty and his Kingdoms; and that, in all their Deliberations upon raising the annual Supplies, and the Distribution of the Publick Revenues, they would pursue such Measures as would most conduce to the present and future Ease of their Fellow-Subjects; and that, in order to give the necessary Dispatch to the Publick Business, and that their Proceedings might carry with them that Weight and Credit in the Nation, which ought always to attend the Resolutions of the Commons of Great Britain, they would endeavour to avoid all unreasonable Heats and Animosities, and not suffer themselves to be diverted, by any specious Pretences whatsoever, from stedfastly pursuing the true Interest of their Country, which should upon all Occasions be their first and principal Care.' This Motion was seconded by Mr Knight, Member for Sudbury, who likewise spoke in Praise of his Majesty's Conduct, and added, 'That he hoped the House would be unanimous in agreeing to the Address of Thanks, moved for by the honourable Member who had spoke before him.' Hereupon Sir John Barnard, Member for London, rose up and mov'd for an Amendment to the said Motion as follows:

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

Debate thereon.
Mr Knight.

Sir J. Barnard.

Mr Speaker,

'I shall always be ready to make all proper Acknowledgements of Thanks to his Majesty; but there are some Words in the Motion made by the honourable Gentleman who spoke first, which I cannot but take Notice of. I do not really know what the honourable Gentleman means by saying, 'We will endeavour to avoid all unreasonable Heats and Animosities, and not suffer ourselves to be diverted by any specious Pretences whatsoever.' I hope there never were, nor never will be any unreasonable Heats or Animosities in this House, nor any specious Pretences made use of by any Gentleman who has the Honour to be a Member thereof; at least, I hope, that if any Man shall ever be vain enough to endeavour to impose upon this House, by making use of specious Pretences for concealing Designs which he dare not openly avow, that there will always be in this House Men of Understanding and Integrity sufficient to expose any such Attempt, and to render it vain and ridiculous. But if any Gentleman of the House happens not to like what is said, or what is moved for by another, cannot he oppose it, and give his Reasons for so doing, without being guilty of any unreasonable Heat or Animosity, or of making use of specious Pretences? I must say, Sir, that the desiring such

Words

Apr 6 Geo. II.
1732-33.

Words to be put into our Address of Thanks to his Majesty, to me looks as if the Gentleman was conscious that there is something to be brought before us, in this Session of Parliament, which he foresees will meet with a warm Opposition; and, I hope, if any Thing of an extraordinary Nature is to be brought before us, no Gentleman will be precluded by these Words, or by any Words that can be put into our Address, from giving his Sentiments freely upon any Question that may occur. If any Thing should happen to be proposed in this House, which evidently appears to be inconsistent with the Liberties or the Trade of this Nation, I hope the Indignation of every Man that thinks so, will rise against such a Proposition, and that he will oppose it with that honest Warmth, as becomes every Man who has the Happiness of his Country really at Heart: Such a Warmth is no unreasonable Heat; it does not proceed from Animosity, but from that honest Zeal, which every Man in this House ought to have for the Constitution of his Country, and for the Liberties and Properties of the People he represents.

‘ But before I say any Thing more upon this Subject, I must take Notice of a preceding Part of the Motion made by the honourable Gentleman: He proposes for us to say, ‘ That we will raise the Supplies in such Manner as will most ‘ conduce to the present and future Ease of the Subject.’ Now, there seems to be a great Jealousy without Doors, as if something were intended to be done in this Session of Parliament, that may be destructive to our Liberties, and detrimental to our Trade: From whence this Jealousy hath arisen, I do not know; but it is certain that there is such a Jealousy among all Sorts of People, and in all Corners of the Nation; and therefore we ought to take the first Opportunity to quiet the Minds of the People, and to assure them that they may depend upon the Honour and Integrity of the Members of this House; and that we never will consent to any Thing that may have the least Appearance of being destructive to their Liberties, or detrimental to their Trade; for which Reason I must move for an Amendment, and that these Words, *And such as shall be consistent with the Trade, Interest, and Liberty of the Nation*, may be added to what the honourable Gentleman has already proposed.’

11. May 1733.

Sir John Barnard was back'd by Mr Sandys, Member for Worcester, who declared, ‘ That he saw no Manner of Occasion for inserting, ‘ That they should endeavour to avoid all unreasonable Heats and Animosities, nor suffer ‘ themselves to be diverted by any specious Pretences;’ for that ’twas never to be presum'd with regard to the House of Commons, that they should fall into any unreasonable Heats and Animosities, or suffer themselves to be diverted by specious

specious Pretences from stedfastly pursuing the true Interest of their Country: That such a Reflection was derogatory to the Honour of the House in general, and of that House in particular, who deserved it, in his Opinion, as little as any House ever did; nay, 'twas somewhat strange that this House, after having sat so quietly for so many Sessions, and granted so many considerable Supplies, should at length so officiously be put in mind of their Duty, and desired to avoid unreasonable Heats and Animosities: And as for the other Part of the Motion, taken Notice of by Sir John Barnard, 'twas his Opinion the Amendment proposed was not only very proper, but also became absolutely necessary at that Juncture.

Anno 6. Geo. II.

1732-33.

Then Mr Shippen moved for a farther Amendment as follows :

Mr Speaker,

' I have always been against long Addresses; I am ready enough to agree to an Address of Thanks to his Majesty for his most gracious Speech from the Throne; but such Address ought to be in the most concise Terms, and the most general Words: This was the ancient Usage of Parliament, and I find but few of our old Customs that are alter'd for the better: However, if we must go on with the Custom of making long-winded Addresses, I think we ought to take some Notice of the Spirit that is at present among the People. It is very certain, that there are great Fears, Jealousies, and Suspicions without Doors, that something is to be attempted in this Session of Parliament, which is generally thought to be destructive to the Liberties and to the Trade of this Nation. There is at present a most remarkable and general Spirit among the People, for protecting and defending their Liberties and their Trade, in Opposition to those Attempts which they expect are to be made against both: From all Quarters we hear of Meetings and Resolutions for that Purpose; and this Spirit is so general, that it cannot be ascribed to any one Set of Men: They cannot be branded with the Name of Jacobites or of Republicans, nor can it be said that this Opposition is made only by Jacobites and Republicans; no, the whole People of England seem to be united in this Spirit of Jealousy and Opposition. Whether there be any Reason or Ground for exerting such a Spirit at present, I do not know; but I am sure it ought not to be entirely neglected. It is well known that I am no Friend to popular Remonstrances; a Man that is a Favourer of Monarchy cannot well approve of such Measures; but such Remonstrances are not to be contemned: A thorough Contempt of them may produce the most terrible Effects.

' I look on it as a most certain Maxim, that the People never would

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would so generally complain, unless they found themselves some way hurt; and then they have a Right to complain; and it is our Duty to take Notice of their Complaints; but at the same Time we ought to have a Regard to the Honour and Dignity of Parliament; for which Reason I shall beg Leave to add to the Amendment proposed, and move that these Words, *And such as shall be consistent with the Honour and Justice of Parliament*, may be added to what has been before proposed.'

Sir R. Walpole.

The Addition of these Words being approved of by Sir John Barnard and Mr Sandys, Sir Robert Walpole stood up next, and spoke as follows.

Mr Speaker,

'I now rise up, Sir, to do what is not usual for me to do; it is to second a Motion made by my worthy Friend who spoke last. I was really of Opinion, that his Majesty's Speech was in such Terms, that no Exception could have been taken to any one Word of it; and the Motion for an Address of Thanks was so short and so agreeable to his Majesty's Speech, that I could not imagine any such Objection could have been made, as has been made to some of the Words thereof. His Majesty in his Speech recommends the avoiding of unreasonable Heats and Animosities, and in Answer to that Part of his Majesty's Speech, the honourable Gentleman, who moved for the Address, proposed that we should say, that we would avoid all unreasonable Heats and Animosities: In my Opinion, there cannot be a more proper Return to that Part of the Speech: And as his Majesty only desires that we would avoid all unreasonable Heats and Animosities, he surely did not thereby intend to preclude any Man from offering his Sentiments freely on whatever may be proposed. If any Thing be proposed that is inconsistent with the Publick Good, no Opposition thereto can be called an unreasonable Heat or Animosity; nor is such an Opposition any Way comprehended in the Words made use of by his Majesty, in his most gracious Speech from the Throne.

'As for the Amendment proposed in the other Part of the Motion, it really seems to me to be liable to the same Objection, that has been made to the Words I have just now taken Notice of. It is not to be presumed that we will do any Thing that is inconsistent with the Honour and Justice of Parliament; if any such Thing should be proposed, it would, without Doubt, be rejected with Scorn. And as for the Trade of the Nation, I do not know what the Gentlemen mean thereby; but as to what I mean by the Trade of the Nation, and in so far as I understand it, I hope nothing will ever be brought into this House that is or can be detrimental

trimental thereto; if there should, it would most certainly be rejected. I am sure, Sir, that I know of no such Design, I know of nothing that is to be brought in, that can any Way injure the Trade of the Nation; but if any Thing can be proposed for the Improvement thereof, I shall very readily agree to it, and so, I hope, will every Gentleman in this House.

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

‘ I agree with the honourable Gentleman who spoke last, that the Complaints of the People are not to be neglected, when they are sincere and true; I hope they will always be regarded by every Gentleman in this House: If the People are hamper’d in their Trade, or in any other Way hurt, they must feel it, and they will feel it before they begin to complain; in such Case it is the Duty of this House, not only to hear their Complaints, but to find out a Remedy, if possible: But the People may be taught to complain, they may be made to feel imaginary Ills, and by such Practices they are often induced to make Complaints before they feel any Uneasiness. However, let the People’s Complaints be real or imaginary, let them be well or ill founded, it does not signify to the present Question: If the Gentlemen think it necessary to add the Words they have proposed, the Adding or not Adding of them is to me a Matter of absolute Indifference, they may do whatever they think proper.’

Sir Robert Walpole having done speaking, Mr Walter Plumer hereupon replied, ‘ That he did not know whether or no the People might be taught to complain when they felt no Hurt; but was well assur’d, that if by any Means they were taught not to complain, they would at last come to feel the Hurt severely, when perhaps their Complaints would avail nothing, but rather expose them to the Contempt of those who had done them the greatest Injuries.’

Mr W. Plumer.

Then Sir John Barnard stood up again, and spoke as follows:

Sir J. Barnard.

Mr Speaker,

‘ If the honourable Gentleman on the Floor [*Sir Robert Walpole*] thinks that our Trade cannot be hurt by what the People seem to be afraid of, I am sure he must think that he understands Trade better than all the Traders in England; and if that is his Notion, I do not really understand what Trade he means, but he must mean, by the Trade of the Nation, something different from what is thereby meant by all those that are concern’d therein, I thought I had given a sufficient Reason for adding the Words I proposed; but since it has been insinuated, that they are liable to the same Objection as the Words first taken Notice of by me, I must explain myself a little farther. It is certainly to be presum’d, that this House will never agree to any Thing that is de-

Anno G. Geo. II.
1732-33.

destructive to the Liberties, or detrimental to the Trade of the Nation: I am sure, if ever we do, we shall do what is inconsistent with the Honour and Justice of Parliament. This is certainly not to be presum'd; yet we find there is a Spirit of Jealousy gone forth; there are very general Apprehensions that some such Thing is intended; and for this Reason, I moved for the Amendment; but there are no Jealousies, no Fears of our falling into unreasonable Heats and Animosities; his Majesty, I hope, never had any such Jealousy, and I am sure the Body of the People apprehend no such Misfortune; and therefore there is no Reason for having any such Words in our Address.

The Question was then put, and the Amendment proposed was agreed to without any Division: Then Sir Thomas Aston, Member for Liverpool, stood up, and made a farther Objection to Mr Bromley's Motion as follows:

Mr Speaker,

'I cannot in any Address, to be presented to his Majesty, approve of saying what I do not believe to be true. It is proposed, that we should congratulate his Majesty upon the Situation of our Affairs both Abroad and at Home. This I cannot by any Means agree to, because I do not really think that our Affairs are in the best Situation either Abroad or at Home. Are not our Neighbours the French still going on in fortifying and restoring the Harbour of Dunkirk, under our very Nose, and contrary to the Faith of the most solemn Treaties? We cannot now say that the French are our good Allies; and by their Behaviour in this Particular, we may see that we cannot much depend upon the Faith of any of the Treaties now subsisting between us and them: Even this very Affair we may, perhaps, in a little Time hear made Use of, as an Argument for our keeping up a numerous Standing Army in Time of Peace; and can we express a Satisfaction at the present Situation of our Affairs, as long as there is any Argument left for keeping up a numerous Standing Army in Time of Peace, which has always been thought so inconsistent with the Constitution and Liberties of our Country?

'Have our Merchants as yet met with any Redress for those Depredations committed upon them by the Spaniards? Is not that Affair still delay'd and put off, notwithstanding the most explicate Engagements enter'd into by the famous Treaty of Seville? That Treaty which we have heard so much applauded, and by which we enter'd into Engagements of the greatest Consequence; on our Part it has been most punctually perform'd. and yet our plunder'd Countrymen, our Merchants, are still waiting for that Reparation, which Justice is due to them, which by the most solemn Engage-

ments

Sir T. Aston.

ments has been stipulated for them, and which was, I may say, the only Stipulation in our Favour contain'd in that Treaty. Shall we then say, that we are satisfy'd with the present Situation of our Affairs, while the Cries and Complaints of our injur'd and unredress'd Countrymen are daily meeting us in every Corner of the Streets?

‘ Again, as to our Home Affairs, is not our Trade daily decaying? Even our Staple Manufacture is almost quite undone. There is scarcely any Sort of Trade in a thriving Condition, but that in Change-Alley; and there, Sir, there are such abominable Frauds, and such wicked Impositions daily practis'd, that many honest well-meaning Men have thereby been totally ruin'd and undone. Does not almost every Session of Parliament open to us some new Scene of Villainy and Roguery? These Calamities are almost universal, they do not fall upon single Persons, or upon a few; but upon Multitudes at a Time; and these, for what I know, may be owing, in some Measure, to some of those Persons who have in their Hands the Management of Publick Affairs: It may be owing to their Neglect that Rogues are thus enabled to dress up and manage such publick Scenes of Knavery. While such fraudulent Practices are suffer'd, and our Trade thereby so much injured, can we approach the Throne, and say in such a solemn Manner, that we are satisfy'd with the Situation of our Affairs at Home? For my Part, I am no Way satisfy'd with the present Situation of our Affairs either Abroad or at Home, and therefore I must move that these Words should be left out, or some Way alter'd.’

Upon this Mr. Speaker stood up, and told Sir Thomas Aston, ‘ That by the Orders of the House, and the constant Forms of their Proceedings, the making of an Amendment to any Part of a Motion, was an Approbation of every preceding Part of that Motion; and as that Part of the Motion, which he propos'd to amend, preceded that which the House had agreed to amend, therefore they could not now receive his Motion.’ This last Motion was therefore dropp'd: Then the Question was put upon the Motion made by Mr Bromley, as amended by Sir John Barnard and Mr Shippen, which was carry'd without any Division; and an Address was drawn up and approv'd of by the House.

Mr. Speaker;

Jan. 18. The same was presented to his Majesty as follows:

Most gracious Sovereign,

WE your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal Subjects, the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament assembled, humbly beg Leave to return your Majesty our most sincere and hearty Thanks, for your most gracious speech from the Throne.

The House,

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

‘ The Situation of Affairs, both at Home and Abroad, gives your faithful Commons the highest Satisfaction, and fills their Hearts with the deepest Sense of Gratitude to your Majesty, being fully sensible, that the present Happiness we enjoy is the entire Effect of your Majesty’s Wisdom and Resolution.

‘ Such Supplies, as shall be necessary for the Honour, Safety and Defence of your Majesty and your Kingdoms, shall chearfully and effectually be raised by your faithful Commons, with all possible Duty to your Majesty, and a just Regard and Concern for those we represent.

‘ We also beg Leave to assure your Majesty, that in all our Deliberations, as well in raising the Supplies, as in the Distribution of the publick Revenues, we will pursue such Measures, as will most conduce to the present and future Ease of our Fellow Subjects, and such as, agreeably to your Majesty’s known Goodness and gracious Intentions towards your People, and the constant Endeavours of your faithful Commons, shall be consistent with the Honour and Justice of Parliament, and with the Trade, Interest, and Liberty of the Nation.’

‘ That our Proceedings may carry with them the Weight and Credit, which always ought to attend the Resolutions of the Commons of Great Britain ; and that the necessary Dispatch may be given to the Publick Business, we will use our utmost Endeavours to avoid all unreasonable Heats and Animosities, and not suffer ourselves to be diverted, by any specious Pretences whatsoever, from stedfastly pursuing the true Interest of our Country, which, in Pursuance of your Majesty’s most gracious Recommendation, from your great Example, and our own indispensable Duty, shall upon all Occasions be our first and principal Care.

To this Address his Majesty return’d the following Answer.

Gentlemen,

The King’s Answer thereto.

“ I Return you my Thanks for these dutiful Assurances of your Zeal and Affection for me ; and I make no Doubt but that your Resolutions to pursue such Measures, as will most conduce to the Ease and true Interest of all my Subjects, will as effectually recommend you to the good Opinion and Esteem of my People, as they are acceptable to me.

Jan. 31. The House having no immediate Business before them, Mr Sandys stood up and spoke as follows :

Mr

Mr Speaker,

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

As the House seems at present to be at Leisure, I shall take the Opportunity to put them in Mind of a Bill, that for two or three Sessions successively has passed in this House, without any Opposition whatever, and has been as often thrown out in the other. What their Reasons were in the other House for so often throwing out such a Bill, I shall not take upon me so much as to guess at; but I think it never met with any real Opposition in this House: There were indeed some Gentlemen, who testified a Sort of a Dislike to the Bill, but I think they never carried it so far as to form any Argument against it, or to bring the Affair to a Debate. It has been often remarked, that there never was, as yet, any thing brought into either House of Parliament, that was really in itself useful and necessary for the publick Welfare, but what, by a proper Perseverance, was at last carried through and passed into a Law. Even a good Thing may, for a considerable Time, by many be mistaken; from private Passions and Prejudices, for want of being rightly understood, it may for some Time meet with Opposition, but Truth and Reason will always at last prevail; and when we are fully convinced of the Goodness and Usefulness of what is offered, it has always hitherto been found, that a Sense of our Duty has in both Houses of Parliament got the better of all other Passions, which some Men might privately harbour in their Breasts. This, Sir, encourages me to persevere in what I have so often had the Honour to offer to this House, and to renew it again this Session, notwithstanding its bad Fate in former Sessions of Parliament. I am thoroughly convinced, that what I have to offer, is not only a good Thing, but absolutely necessary for the Preservation of our Constitution; and therefore I hope it will, by its own Weight, at last force its Way through the Opposition it has hitherto met with.

I believe, Sir, every Gentleman in the House, by this Time, supposes that I mean the Bill, *For making more effectual the Laws in being, for disabling Persons from being chosen Members of, or Sitting or Voting in this House, who have any Pension during Pleasure, or for any Number of Years, or any Office-held in Trust for them.* This is the Bill I propose to have renewed; and as this House has been fully apprized of the Contents of the Bill, designed in former Sessions, for these good and salutary Purposes, I have prepared a Bill which I have here ready to offer to the House, and which is the very same, Word for Word, with that which in the very last Session of Parliament had the Approbation of this House; I therefore think it quite unnecessary to move the House for Leave to bring in such a Bill; but my Motion shall be for Leave to bring up the Bill which I have now in my Hand.

Hereupon

Mr Sandys's Motion for bringing up the same Pension-Bill, which was pass'd last Session by the Commons, and rejected by the Lords.

Anno 5. Geo. II.
1732-33.

Mr. Winnington's
Objection to that
Manner of intro-
ducing the Pen-
sion-Bill.

Debate thereon.

Sir E. Stanley.

Sir W. Yonge.

‘ Hereupon Mr Winnington observed, ‘ That the constant Practice of the House, for an hundred Years past, has been to move for a Bill to be brought in, and not for Leave to bring it up to the Bar : That should this laudable Method be broke into, and the ancient Custom reviv’d for each Member to present what he pleas’d, they might be surpriz’d into Things very improper and inconsistent with the Dignity of the House : That therefore, though he had nothing to say against the Bill, ’twas his Opinion the honourable Gentleman’s Motion ought not to be comply’d with : Then to wave the Question, he call’d for the Order of the Day. Upon this Sir Edward Stanley, Knight of the Shire for Lancashire, spoke for the Motion, and declar’d, ‘ That he saw nothing in it irregular ; for that Leave to bring in a Bill, or Leave to bring up a Bill, was in Effect the same Leave ; nor could he conceive wherein lay the mighty Difference.’

Hereupon Sir William Yonge spoke as follows :

Mr. Speaker,

‘ I do not at all wonder to see the Gentleman who made the first Motion, persevere in the same Thing ; but I must confess I am a little surpriz’d to see several State-Topicks every Year renewed and insist’d on by some Gentlemen in this House, notwithstanding their having seen these Topicks so often disapproved of by a Majority of the House. As to these, I am really quite tired with hearing the same Arguments repeated over and over again every Session of Parliament : The honourable Gentleman should not have said, that the Bill he mentioned had always pass’d, even in this House, without Opposition ; there were generally some Gentlemen appear’d against it, and even testified their Dislike to it : But let the Bill be what it will, let it be a good Thing, or let it be a bad Thing, the Manner in which the Gentleman desires to have it introduced is very extraordinary. It is indeed a Privilege of the Members of the other House, that any Lord may offer a Petition or a Bill to the House without asking Leave of the House ; but this Privilege the Members of this House have, for the Sake of Decency and Order, given up long ago ; and I can see no manner of Reason for our re-assuming it, or for our beginning now to extend our Privileges beyond what they have been for so many Years past. As to the bringing of Bills into this House, it is well known, that the usual Motion on such Occasions is for Leave to bring in such a Bill as is propos’d ; but this is a new Sort of Motion ; it is a Motion for Leave to bring up such a Bill, which is a very extraordinary Motion, and such as I am sure there is, in the present Case, no manner of Occasion for, and therefore I really think the Motion ought to be rejected, it ought to have a Negative put upon it ; but since the worthy Gentleman

the man near me [Mr *Winnington*] has waved that Point, and has moved for the Order of the Day, I shall now only second his Motion.

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

Mr Walter Plumer stood up next, and took Notice of what Sir William Yonge had urg'd touching the same Arguments being repeated every Session of Parliament, tho' the Majority had often determined against them; and added, 'That whatever that Gentleman might think in that Respect, it was his Opinion the Majority could not alter the Nature of Right and Wrong; and for his Part, let the Majority determine as often as they would, yet he should always be ready to offer those Arguments, which he took to be good ones, against such as he thought were not so: As for the Gentleman's being afraid lest the Members of this House should re-assume any ancient Privilege, or extend those they at present enjoy, he saw no Reason for his being so cautious in that Respect, since what was proposed was in Effect no Reassumption of any old Privilege, nor Extension of any Privilege they enjoy'd, it was at most neglecting only a Piece of Form upon an extraordinary Occasion, when there appear'd no manner of Use in observing it.'

Mr W. Plumer.

Then Sir William Wyndham spoke as follows:

Sir,

'I am surpriz'd to hear any Gentleman in this House find Fault with Gentlemen insisting upon their Opinions, notwithstanding their having been disapproved of by a Majority in former Sessions of Parliament. I do not think that the Majority's being of a contrary Opinion, can ever be made Use of as an Argument for convincing Men that they are in the wrong: The Minority, notwithstanding their being out-voted, may still have as good an Opinion of their Opinions, as the Majority have of theirs. It has often happened, that what has been disapproved of by the Majority in one Session of Parliament, has been approved of by a Majority in some future, perhaps in the very next Session of Parliament; and even as to the Bill now in Hand, it has been two or three Times approv'd of by the Majority of this House, and as often rejected or disapproved by the Majority of the other House; what their Reasons were I do not know, but I am of Opinion, that the same Reasons against the Bill were not offered to the Members of this House, that were offered to the Members of the other; for if they had, it would probably have been disapproved of, and rejected by the Majority even of this House. From hence it appears, that the Majority's being of any one Opinion, is no infallible Sign of that Opinion's being right. This, Sir, I thought myself obliged to take Notice of, that those Gentlemen, who happen to be generally of the same Opinion with the Majority,

Sir W. Wyndham.

ity,

Anne 6. Geo. II.
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rity, may not from thence conclude that they are certainly right. As to the Matter now in Dispute, I really think it is of no Moment : Whether the Gentleman shall have Leave to bring up the Bill, or to bring in a Bill, is to me a Matter of so much Indifference, that I cannot find out a Reason why the Gentleman's Motion should have been oppos'd ; for to order a Gentleman to prepare a Bill, after he has told us that he has prepared one, and that it is the very same with what the Majority of this House has in former Sessions approved of, really seems to me to be a little incongruous : I can find out no Reason for Gentlemen's insisting upon this Piece of Incongruity, unless it be that they have a Dislike to the Bill itself. We certainly ought in general to observe the usual Method of Proceedings ; but surely, we ought not to observe any customary Method, when the observing it appears to be in itself absurd.'

Sir J. Rushout.

Upon this Sir John Rushout declar'd, 'That he saw nothing in the Motion either new or unprecedented : That he remembered there was a Bill presented in the House of late Years, in the same or rather in a more extraordinary Manner, and this was the last Suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act in the late Reign ; when the Gentleman who brought in that Bill, sitting close at the Bar of the House, rose up, and after informing the House of the Danger the Crown and Kingdom were in from the rebellious Plots then carrying on, and the Necessity of empowering his Majesty to secure all suspected Persons, he told them he had prepared a Bill for that Purpose, and therefore moved for Leave to bring it up, which was immediately granted ; and the Bill, to the best of his Memory, was read twice that Day, and ordered to be committed : That this was something more extraordinary than the Motion before them, because the Bill then ordered to be brought up had never been before the House, and by Consequence no Member could be any way appriz'd of the Contents thereof ; whereas the Bill in Question had been before the House, and frequently had their Approbation : That as for the Privilege inherent in every Member of this House, he believ'd none would dispute but that the ancient Method has been for any Member to offer what he pleases.'

Sir W. Yonge.

Hereupon Sir William Yonge stood up, and explained himself with regard to that Part of his Speech, which touch'd on the Privilege of Members. He said, 'That there seem'd to be a Mistake, as to what he had mentioned about the Members of the House not being allowed to bring in any Thing without Leave of the House : That this has not properly any Relation with what are called the Privileges of the House : That it is only a Restraint which the Members of the House have thought proper to lay on themselves, for the more orderly

derly carrying on the Publick Business, and to prevent any Thing that is trifling from being brought before us ; and this Restraint has been found so convenient and necessary for preserving the Honour and Dignity of the House, that it has never for many Years been departed from, but upon the most extraordinary Occasions.'

Anno 6. Geo. II.

1732 33.

Sir William Yonge was back'd by Sir Robert Walpole, who added, ' That the Precedent quoted by Sir John Rushout was on one of the most extraordinary Occasions that ever can happen, and in a Case that required the utmost Dispatch ; That in short there was no Comparison between that Case and the Case before them ; That the Case of this Bill did in no ways depend on this extraordinary Method ; for should the Gentleman move in the usual Manner for Leave to bring in the Bill, and Orders should thereupon be given by the House to some Gentlemen to prepare and bring in the same, this Method would be no Hindrance to the passing of the Bill, or occasion its being put off 'till the next Session of Parliament.' Upon this Mr Sandys rose up, and spoke a second Time as follows ;

Sir R. Walpole.

Mr Sandys,

Sir,

' I shall be very far from making any Comparisons between the Case in Hand, or between any Case, and that which immediately concerns the Safety and Preservation of the Crown : But, as I had assured you that the Bill, which I have in my Hand, was the very same with that which had before been approved of by this House, I thought it was quite unnecessary for the House to observe that Ceremony of ordering some Gentlemen to prepare and bring in a Bill, which was already prepared ; and which the House has approved of in the very last Session of Parliament : This was my Reason for moving for Leave to bring it up. I do not desire to bring any Thing into this House without first having the Leave of the House for so doing ; yet I cannot think, that though the antient Method of proceeding were revived, the House would be in any Danger of being surprized into any Thing : There is no Bill can pass in this House 'till it has been three Times read in the House, and has passed thro' a Committee of the House ; and while those Forms are observed, the House never can be surprized into the passing of any Bill, even though we should again re-assume that Privilege of every Member's having a Power to bring into the House whatever he pleases. It is not the Restraint we have laid ourselves under, that prevents the House's being surprized ; it is the Necessity of having the Bill so often read before it can pass ; for when a Gentleman has moved for Leave to bring in any Bill for the Purposes he mentions, the House cannot know whether the Bill prepared and brought in be according to their

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their Orders till it be once read in the House : Some Gentlemen might move for Leave to bring in a Bill, and upon their obtaining such Leave, and being ordered to prepare and bring in the same, might bring in a Bill of a quite different Nature ; but this would probably be discover'd on the first Reading, and the Bill would without Doubt be thrown out ; and whoever endeavour'd thus to impose on the House, would deserve, and would probably meet with a most severe Censure.

‘ But the present Dispute is not whether any Thing shall be brought into the House without Leave ; the whole Dispute really seems to be between the Words *to bring up*, and the Words *to bring in* ; for my Part, I am quite indifferent in this Affair ; whether I have Leave to bring it up now, or to bring it in a little while hence, does not, in my Opinion, signify much ; if I have Leave to bring it up, I must immediately take a Walk to the Bar ; if I have Leave to bring in a Bill, and am order'd to prepare one for that Purpose, I shall take a Walk the same Way in a very little Time ; this I do not take to be any material Difference : But as for the Bill itself, I do think it of such Consequence, that if there were any Method by which we could shew a more than ordinary Regard to this Bill, that Method ought certainly to be observed.’

A Precedent relating to the bringing up a Bill, read by Mr Speaker.

Then Mr Speaker read, from the Journal of the House of the 9th Year of the Reign of King George I. the Precedent mention'd by Sir John Rushout, and said,

Gentlemen,

THE usual Method of Proceeding in this House, as to bringing in of Bills is, first, to move for Leave to bring in a Bill for such or such Purposes, and that being agreed to, the House then orders some of their own Number to prepare and bring in the Bill ; this is the usual Method, but in the Precedent I have now read to you it appears, that the then Solicitor General [Sir P. Yorke.] moved for Leave to bring up such a Bill, which was granted, and he immediately brought up the Bill, and the same was read a first Time ; from which it is plain that Mr Solicitor, when he made his Motion, inform'd the House that he had prepared such a Bill, and had it then ready to be laid before them, and therefore he moved for Leave to bring it up, which it seems the House at this Time comply'd with.

Upon this some Members suspecting that Mr Speaker was, in Pursuance of this Precedent, going to put the Question on the Motion made by Mr. Sandys, they call'd out, No, No. Hereupon Mr Speaker immediately resum'd his Speech, as follows.

Gentlemen,

Gentlemen,

Anno 6. Geo. 1st.

1732-33.

At to the Affair in Hand, or any Affair that comes before this House, I am not to appear of one Side of the Question, nor of the other. It is my Business to take Care that the Orders and Methods of Proceeding shall be regularly observed. In all Questions about Order I am to inform you, so far as consists with my Knowledge, of what has been formerly done in the like Cases; and I am to take Care that all Decency and Order shall be observed, both in our Debates and Proceedings: This is my Duty, and this I shall always endeavour to perform as far as lies in my Power: In all Cases I am to observe those Directions that the House shall be pleased to give; and in the present Case I only desire to know from you, what Method you will observe, whether you are inclin'd to follow the Precedent now read to you, or if you are inclin'd to proceed according to the Method usually observed: But I must put you in Mind, that if you proceed according to the usual Method, Decency requires that the Bill shall not be brought in immediately after the Order for preparing and bringing in the same; it is necessary that some Time should intervene between the Order for preparing it, and the Presenting of it to the House; and therefore I must desire, that those Gentlemen who shall be order'd to prepare and bring it in, may not go immediately to the Bar, and tell us, that they have, according to Order, prepared such a Bill, and are ready to bring it in.

Hereupon Mr Sandys not insisting on his Motion, but agreeing to have the Bill brought in according to the usual Method, the Question was put, That Leave be given to bring in a Bill, *For making more effectual the Laws in Being for disabling Persons from being chosen Members of, or sitting or voting in, the House of Commons, who have any Pension during Pleasure, or for any Number of Years, or any Offices held in Trust for them;* This being agreed to without any Opposition, Mr Sandys and Sir Edward Stanley were order'd to prepare and bring in the same. Then the House resolv'd itself into a Committee of the Supply, and as soon as that was over, Mr Sandys presented the said Bill to the House, which was received and read the first Time, and order'd to be read a second Time.

February 2. The House resolv'd itself into a Committee, to consider farther of the Supply granted to his Majesty, and Mr* Andrews, Member for Hindon, moved, 'That the Number of effective Men to be provided for Guards and Garrisons in Great Britain, and for Guernsey and Jersey, for the Year 1733, be, including 1815 Invalids, and 555 Men, which the Six Independent Companies consist of, for the

L 1 2

Service

* Deputy Paymaster of the Forces.

Mr Sandys drops his Motion for bringing up the Pension Bill;

And instead thereof a Bill to the same Effect is order'd to be brought in.

Debate concerning the Number of Land-Forces.

Mr Andrews.

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

Service of the Highlands, 17,709 Men, Commission and Non-Commission Officers included.

Mr Whitworth.
Sir T. Robinson.
Sir R. Lane.
Sir A. Croft.
Sir W. Yonge.
Mr H. Pelham.
Mr H. Walpole.
Sir R. Walpole

Lord Morpeth,

Mr Harley.

Mr Bramston.
Mr Rolle.
Sir J. Barnard.
Sir J. Jekyll.
Mr Shippen.
Sir W. Wyndham.
Mr Palmer.
Mr T. Wyndham.
Mr Edw. Digby.
Mr W. Pulteney.
Sir John St. Aubin.
Sir T. Saunderson.
Sir J. Hinde Cotton.

Sir A. Croft.

Sir R. Walpole.

This Motion was seconded by Mr Whitworth, Member for Minehead; and supported by Sir Thomas Robinson, Member for Morpeth; Sir Richard Lane, Member for Worcester; Sir Archer Croft, Member for Beeralston; Sir William Yonge, Hon. Mr Henry Pelham, Mr Horatio Walpole, and Sir Robert Walpole: But was very warmly oppos'd by several Members; and the Lord Morpeth thereupon mov'd, 'That the Number of effective Men for the Year 1733, be only 12,000; he was seconded by Mr Harley, Member for the County of Hereford; and back'd by Mr Bramston, Member for Malden; Mr Rolle, Knight of the Shire for Devonshire; Sir John Barnard, Sir Joseph Jekyll, Mr Shippen, Sir William Wyndham, Mr Palmer, Member for Bridgewater; Mr Thomas Wyndham, Hon. Mr Edward Digby, Knight of the Shire for Warwick; Mr Pulteney, Sir John St. Aubin, Knight of the Shire for Cornwall; Sir Thomas Saunderson, Knight of the Shire for Lincoln; and Sir John Hinde Cotton, Member for Cambridge. The Courtiers urg'd in Support of the Motion, 'That tho' the publick Tranquility of Europe was now established, yet the Preservation thereof depended on so many Accidents, that it could not be certainly rely'd on, and therefore we ought always to be in such Circumstances, as to be able not only to defend ourselves, but likewise to fulfil all our Engagements to our Allies: That there was still a very powerful and considerable Party in the Kingdom, firmly attach'd to the Interest of the Pretender, and daily watching for an Opportunity to disturb the Quiet of the Nation, by endeavouring to overturn the present happy Establishment; and therefore it was necessary to keep up an armed Force sufficient to dissipate any sudden Insurrection that might be rais'd by such Men: That this Party was still the more audacious, and the more to be dreaded, because they were encouraged and spirited up by a great many scandalous and seditious Libels, which were daily spread abroad, even by those who pretended to be Friends to the Protestant Succession, and to the illustrious Family now on the Throne.' Sir Archer Croft said on this Occasion, 'That the continuing of the same Number of Forces was the more necessary, because to his Knowledge Popery was increasing very fast in the Country, for that in one Parish which he knew, there were no less than seven Popish Priests; and that the Danger from the Pretender was the more to be feared, because they did not know but that he was then breeding his Son a Pretender.' Then Sir Robert Walpole took Notice, 'That a Reduction of the Army was the chief Thing wished for and desired by all the Jacobites in the Kingdom;

Kingdom ; that no Reduction had ever been made, but what gave fresh Hopes to that Party, and encouraged them to raise Tumults against the Government ; and he did not doubt, but that if they should resolve to reduce any Part of the Army, there would be Post-Horses employ'd that very Night, to carry the good News thereof to the Pretender and his Adherents beyond Seas.' To this Mr Horatio Walpole added, ' That the Number of Troops then propos'd was absolutely necessary to support his Majesty's Government, and would be necessary, as long as the Nation enjoy'd the Happiness of having the present illustrious Family on the Throne.'

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

Mr H. Walpole.

Sir William Wyndham alledg'd, in Support of Lord Mordeth's Motion, ' That if they gave any Credit to his Majesty's Speech from the Throne at the Opening of the Session, which they were in Duty bound to do, the Tranquility of Europe never was, nor ever could be on a more firm Basis than at present, and therefore a Reduction was now to be made in the Army, or such Reduction was never to be expected: That as to the Pretender, he did not believe that there was any considerable Party for him in this Nation: That that Pretence had always been a Ministerial Device made use of only for accomplishing their own Ends ; but that it was in reality a meer Bugbear, a Raw-Head and Bloody-Bones, fit only to frighten Children ; for that he was very well convinced his Majesty reigned in the Hearts and Affections of his People ; upon that his Majesty's Security depended ; and if it did not depend on that, the illustrious Family now on the Throne could have but little Security in the present Number, or in any Number of Standing-Forces, that could be kept up for its Defence: That if there was any Disaffection, or any Discontent in the Nation, it was owing to the keeping up of such a numerous Standing Army in Time of Peace within this Kingdom, whereby the People were subjected to many Loads and Hardships which they were never before acquainted with : That the People of England had never gone into any violent Measures, or carry'd their Resentment to any Pitch against the Prince upon the Throne, but when the Prince, or those employ'd by him, were first in the Fault : That this Maxim was so generally true, that in our whole History, there was no Instance to the contrary, but only that which happen'd in the Reign of King Charles I. and that therefore, if there was any Uneasiness among the People, the proper Remedy was, to remove those Things which were the Causes thereof: If the Ministers should change their Measures, the People would certainly alter their Minds: That the Dutch were, by the Situation of their Country, in a much more dangerous State

Sir W. Wyndham.

than

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

Mr Shippen.

than we are or can be in, and yet the Dutch had then resolved on a Reduction of their Army, and therefore we could have no Pretence for continuing ours.'

Mr Shippen likewise observ'd, 'That though the general Arguments in the Affair before them had often been canvassed in that House, yet, that the Debate of this Day seem'd to him something new: In former Years the Gentlemen, who argued for the Continuance of a numerous Standing Army in Time of Peace, always argu'd for the Continuance thereof only for one Year longer; but that Gentleman had now thrown off the Mask, and were become daring enough to declare, 'That the same Number of Forces must always be kept up; and that a numerous Army must forever be continu'd, and be made, as it were, a Part of our Constitution:' That we have already continu'd the Army so long, that some Gentlemen had told the House this Day, what no Man would have ventur'd to have told them a few Years ago: That if they continued the same Army but a little while longer, it might be in the Power of some Gentlemen to talk to the House, in Terms no Way agreeable to the Constitution or to the Liberties of our Country: That to tell the House that the same Number of Forces must be always kept up, was a Proposition fraught with innumerable Evils, and more particularly with this, that it may make wicked Ministers more audacious, than otherwise they would be, in projecting and propagating Schemes, which may be inconsistent with the Liberties, destructive to the Trade, and burthensome on the People of this Nation: That in Countries which are governed by Standing Armies, the Inclinations of the People are but little minded, the Ministers place their Security in the Army, the Humours of the Army they only consult, with them they divide the Spoils, and the wretched People are plunder'd by both.' He added, 'That in this Kingdom, his Majesty has the Hearts, the Hands, and the Purles of all his Subjects at his Service, and he wish'd he might have them always at his Service; but he hoped they would never be in his Power; That his Majesty desired no such Thing; That he never can desire it; That he depends only on the Affections of his People; That therefore he was convinced, that the Demand of so numerous a Standing Army never could come from him: That it was no Way necessary for his Support, whatever it might be for the Support of those who now desired to have it continued.' Mr Rolle said, 'To him it appear'd, in order to preserve ourselves against one who might perhaps prove a Tyrant, we were going to establish 18,000 Tyrants, and to make their Establishment in some Measure a Part of our Constitution: And that in order to be free of a Religion which we think a bad one, we are resolved

Mr Rolle.

resolved to have none at all : That as to the Party which the Pretender had in this Nation, he could not believe there was any such Thing : It was nothing but a mere Pretence, and the making Use of that Pretence on all Occasions, really could not but make him recall to Mind that wicked and blasphemous Saying of Pope Leo X. who, on Occasion of a Procession's passing by while he was at an elegant Entertainment, said to his Cardinals, *Quantum profuit Nobis hæc Fabula Christi !* He concluded with these Words : Let us do as our Forefathers used to do, *Let us remove the Wicked from before the King, that so his Throne may be establish'd in Righteousness.* Mr Pulteney said, ' That he could not but be diverted with some Arguments that were then, and had been on former Occasions made Use of, for keeping up a Standing Army in Time of Peace : That the last Year the House was told, that a Popish Solicitor was a dangerous Man to the Government, [See p. 123.] and now that Popish Solicitor had spawn'd out seven Popish Priests, [See p. 268.] and even the Post-Horses [See p. 269.] had join'd in this traiterous Confederacy.'

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

Mr Pulteney.

In Answer to the Argument brought from the Reduction of the Dutch Forces, Mr Pelham declar'd, ' That the Reduction mention'd was not then agreed to by the States General : That it was a great Question whether it would or no, and if it should, it was only a Reduction of the last Augmentation, whereas the last Augmentation had been reduced by us long ago ; so that the Dutch were now only going to make that Reduction, which we had made upon the first Prospect we had of seeing the Tranquility of Europe establish'd : That tho' the Reduction propos'd in Holland should be made by them, yet they would still have in Proportion a much greater Number of Standing Forces, than what was now propos'd to be kept up in this Kingdom.' Sir Robert Walpole added, ' That he could not help taking Notice of an Observation one Gentleman had made, as to the People's never carrying their Resentment to any Pitch against the Prince upon the Throne, unless the Prince, or those employ'd by him, were first guilty of some Fault : That that Member was pleas'd to admit of one Exception to this Rule, in the Case of King Charles I. But the Gentleman ought to have admitted of another Exception, and that was in the Time of King George I. That he did not know what Pitch of Resentment the Gentleman might mean, but he was sure there were some People, who carry'd their Resentment against that King to a very high Pitch ; and it could not be said that he was ever guilty of any Fault, nor that those employ'd by him had, then at least, been guilty of any Fault ; yet some People carried their Resentment so high, that they appear'd

Mr Pelham.

Sir R. Walpole.

in

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

in Arms, in order to dethrone him; That he thank'd God, they did not succeed in their Attempt: That they happen'd to be defeated by the small Number of Regular Forces we had then in the Kingdom, which were much inferior to them in Number; such was our great good Luck at that Time; but that he must say, That those Gentlemen, who desired to have the Country left as void of Defence as it was at that Time, could have but little Regard for our present happy Constitution, or for the Security of the illustrious Family now upon the Throne.'

Then the Question being put on the Motion made by Mr Andrews, it was agreed to by 239 against 171.

Feb. 5. The above Resolution of the Committee was reported to the House, and thereupon Mr Watkin-Williams Wynne, Knight of the Shire for Denbigh, mov'd for the recommitting of that Resolution; which Motion was seconded by Mr William Bromley, Member for Warwick; and supported by Sir John St Aubin, Mr Sandys, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Mr William Gwyn Vaughan, Mr Heathcote, and Mr Wyndham. They were oppos'd by Lord Hervev, Lord Malpas, Mr Danvers, Mr Clutterbuck, Sir Philip Yorke, and Col. Bladen. In this Debate Mr Clutterbuck having said, 'That he wonder'd to see Gentlemen so jealous of Encroachments upon our Constitution, at a Time when it was in its greatest Vigour, and shone forth in its purest Lustre;' Mr Wyndham, in answer thereto, gave the House an historical Account of our Constitution, and of the several Dangers it had been in, and the Changes it had gone through; and from thence he shew'd, 'That it was very far from being now in its greatest Vigour, and that on the contrary, there were many bad Customs had crept in of late, which were of dangerous Consequence to our Constitution; and might prove to be the Cause of its Overthrow, if some effectual Remedy was not speedily apply'd.'

Then the Question being put, for recommitting the above-mentioned Resolution of the Committee, it was carried in the Negative, by 207 against 143; after which the said Resolution was agreed to by the House.

Then the Lord Morpeth stood up, and represented the bad Circumstances of the Nation, by reason of the great Debts and the many Taxes the People groan'd under, and therefore mov'd, 'That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, to desire his Majesty, that he would be graciously pleas'd, from his earnest Desire to ease his People of every Charge not absolutely necessary, and his Regard to the Constitution of this Kingdom, to take the first favourable Opportunity of making a Reduction of those Forces, which this House hath voted in pursuance of the Estimate laid before

Mr W. Williams
Wynne's Mo-
tion for recommit-
ting the Resolution
of the Committee
relating to the
Land-Forces.

Debate thereon.

Mr W. Bromley.
Sir John St Aubin.
Mr Sandys.
Sir Wilfr. Lawson.
Mr William Gwyn

Vaughan.
Mr Heathcote.
Mr Wyndham.

Lord Hervev.
Lord Malpas.
Mr Danvers.
Mr Clutterbuck.
Sir Philip Yorke.
Col. Bladen.

The Resolution of
the Committee
agreed to by the
House.

Lord Morpeth
moves for an Ad-
dress to the King,
to reduce the Land-
Forces on the first
Opportunity.

Debate thereon.

fore them by his Majesty's Direction.' His Lordship was seconded by Mr Sandys, Sir William Wyndham, Mr Pulteney, Mr Shippen, and Mr Heathcote, who urg'd, 'The great Necessity that there was for taking all Opportunities to reduce the publick Expence; that thereby some of those Taxes might be taken off, which at present lay so heavy on our Trade and our Manufactures, that most of our Neighbours were enabled to undersell us in foreign Markets: That the keeping up of a Standing-Army in Time of Peace, without any absolute Necessity for so doing, was altogether inconsistent with the Liberties of this Nation: That tho' there might be at present an absolute Necessity for keeping up the Number of Forces agreed to by that House, yet that that Necessity might cease in a few Months, perhaps in a few Weeks; and if so, it would then become necessary both for the Ease of the Nation, and for the Preservation of the Constitution, to disband some of them: That though the King was always to be presumed to be thoroughly acquainted with the Circumstances of the Nation, and always inclined to do that which might most contribute to the publick Welfare; yet it had always been the Custom of that House, and was their Duty, to address the King upon Matters of very great Consequence; in order to recommend to his Majesty those Measures which they thought would conduce most to the Happiness and Safety of the Nation.' But this Motion was oppos'd by Mr Talbot, Lord Hervey, Mr Henry Pelham, and Sir Robert Walpole, who alledg'd, 'That the Presenting of such an Address was in some Measure inconsistent with the Resolution they had then agreed to: That it was resolving that the Number of Forces for the Year 1733 should be so many; and addressing that they should not be so many: That these two Resolutions, following one another upon their Journals, would appear to be very extraordinary: That besides, the Presenting of such an Address would be disrespectful to his Majesty, in so far as it would be a Sort of Insinuation that his Majesty might neglect taking the first Opportunity of reducing the Army, and thereby lessening the publick Charge; and as they never yet had the least Occasion to suspect any such Thing, it would be now unjust to harbour any such Suspicion: That in many Cases it might be the Custom, it might be the Duty of that House, to address the Throne on particular Emergencies; but in a Case that regarded his Majesty and his Administration in such a general Manner, as the Case in Hand did, it would be most disrespectful: That they might as well address his Majesty to govern according to Law, or not to encroach upon the Constitution; and an Address in such Terms would, they believ'd, be allow'd to be shewing a very high Disrespect to the King

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1732-33.

Mr Sandys.
Sir W. Wyndham.
Mr W. Pulteney.
Mr Shippen.
Mr Heathcote.

Mr Talbot.
Lord Hervey.
Mr H. Pelham.
Sir R. Walpole.

Anno 6. Geo. II.

1732-33.

Mr Shippen.

upon the Throne.' Mr Shippen, on the other Hand, insisted, ' That his Majesty knew how much the Nation was loaded with Debts and Taxes, and how inconsistent it was with our Constitution to keep up a Standing-Army in Time of Peace, and that therefore his Majesty, he was sure, would not look on their Presenting of such an Address as any Way disrespectful to him.' Some Members having taken Offence at these Expressions Mr Shippen reply'd, ' That he could not but look on himself as a very unfortunate Man, for that in the late Reign he had incurr'd the Displeasure of many Gentlemen, and had undergone a severe Censure of that House, for saying that it was one of the greatest Misfortunes of his late Majesty's Reign, that he did not know our Language, and was unacquainted with our Constitution; [See Vol. I. p. 157.] and that now he had disobliged several others, by saying that his present Majesty well knows the Circumstances of the Nation, and is acquainted with our Constitution: But that, however, he could not help thinking but that his Majesty was thoroughly acquainted with both; and that therefore he would look upon such an Address, as proceeding from that honest Care and Concern, which every Member ought to have for those who sent them thither, and not as proceeding from any Disrespect towards him: That his Majesty could not be displeased therewith, and that those they represented must be highly pleased to see the House so watchful of all Opportunities to lessen their Charge, and to recommend their Ease and Advantage to the Crown.' But the Question being put on the Lord Morpeth's Motion, it was carried in the Negative, by 203 against 136.

Motion for raising the Supply for the current Year, without creating a new Debt on any of the Funds.

Feb. 7. Being the Day on which the House was, according to Order, to resolve itself into a Committee to consider of Ways and Means for raising the Supply granted to his Majesty; a Motion was made, ' That this House will raise the necessary Supplies for the current Service of this Year, without creating any new Debt upon any Fund whatsoever.' But upon the Question's being put, it was carried in the Negative.

Feb. 13. The Affair of the Spanish Depredations having given great Uneasiness to the whole Nation, Sir Wilfrid Lawson rose up, and spoke as follows:

Sir,

Sir Wilf. Lawson's Motion for an Address to the King, to know what Satisfaction had been made by the Spaniards to the British Merchants.

Debate thereon,

' The many and great Losses our Merchants have sustained by the Depredations committed on them by the Spaniards, are, I believe, well known to every Gentleman in this House; and it is likewise known, that by the second separate Article of the Treaty of Seville, all those Affairs were to have been settled and adjusted in the Space of three Years: These three Years are now expired, but I do not find that any Body knows

knows how any of those Affairs have been settled and adjusted, at least I cannot hear of any one of our Merchants who has met with any Redress.

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1732-33.

‘ As the Time is now expir’d, I hope our Merchants have already got, or are very soon to receive a sufficient Reparation for all their Sufferings ; this I hope for, and I should be extremely glad to have my Hopes confirmed ; it is an Affair on which the Happiness of many private Men depends, and is of so much Consequence both to the Honour and Trade of this Nation, that it is incumbent upon us, as Members of this House, to inquire into it ; and therefore I shall move, That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, that he will be graciously pleased to give Direction, that there may be laid before this House, Copies of the Reports made by his Majesty’s Commissaries in Spain, together with all Letters and Papers relating thereto ; and what Satisfaction has been made to the Subjects of Great-Britain, for the Losses they sustained by the Depredations of the Spaniards in Europe, or in the Indies, pursuant to the second separate Article of the Treaty of Peace, Union, Friendship, and mutual Defence, between the Crowns of Great-Britain, France, and Spain, concluded at Seville on the 9th of November, 1729.’

This Motion being seconded, Sir Robert Walpole stood up and spoke as follows :

Mr Speaker,

‘ Such an Address as has been moved for, may, if Gentlemen insist on it, be presented to his Majesty, but I can now assure you, that there is as yet nothing that his Majesty can lay before you ; for though by the Treaty of Seville the Commissaries of the two Nations were to settle all the Affairs, referred to them by that Treaty, within the Space of three Years from the Date thereof, yet, by Reason of several unforeseen Accidents, they never could meet so as to enter upon, or do any Business till the Month of February last : Since that Time they have been proceeding upon the Affairs referred to them ; but as yet there is nothing brought to that Maturity, or formed into such a Shape, as to be proper to be laid before this House. The Delays they at first met with made it necessary to prolong the Time for settling and adjusting those Matters, and therefore it has been agreed between the two Nations, that the three Years shall be computed from that Day in February last, on which the Commissaries first met ; and by that Time it is to be hoped that all those Affairs will be settled in such a Manner, as will give full Satisfaction to every Member of this House, and full Reparation to every one of the Subjects of Great-Britain, who has met with a real Injury from the Spaniards.’

To this Mr Pulteney replied,

M m 2

Sir

Anno 6. Geo. II.

1732-33.

Mr W. Pulteney.

Sir,

‘ There is a Term made use of in the Exchequer, called *Nichil*, which Term has been sometimes made use of by the Gentleman who spoke last, and has often been given as an Answer to this House, when Accounts of the Produce of some certain Branches of the Revenue have been called for. Now as to the present Affair, it may be that there has not as yet been any Thing done, or at least not brought to Maturity, and formed into such a Shape, as to be proper to be laid before this House: This, I say, may be the Case, though I must say it is a little surprizing, that in so long a Time there should have been nothing done; however, supposing that it is the Case, yet his Majesty may give us this Exchequer-Term for Answer; he may tell us that there has not as yet been any Thing done: It is from his Majesty only, that this House can properly have an Answer; even such an Answer we are not to take from any Member of this House, or from any Subject whatsoever. And as the Presenting of such an Address to his Majesty, will shew our Constituents that we are careful of the Affairs of the Nation, and have a Concern for the Merchants, who have been so great Sufferers by the Depredations committed by the Spaniards; therefore I am for agreeing with the Motion.’

Sir T. Aston.

Mr Pulteney was back'd by Sir Thomas Aston as follows:

Sir,

‘ If in all this Time there has been nothing done by those Commissaries, I am much afraid that this Affair may be spun out to a very great Length. I do not know but that it may last as long as the Gentlemen who are employed as our Commissaries may live; for as they have thereby a good Salary from, and all their Charges borne by their Country, they may not perhaps be too hasty in concluding the Affairs referred to them, and thereby putting an End to the beneficial Post they enjoy; and on the other Hand it is to be presumed, that the Spaniards will make use of all the Excuses they can invent, for delaying their making that Reparation, which in Justice they ought to do, and which we are engaged in Honour to insist on. It is therefore our Duty, as Members of this House, to desire from Time to Time to know what is doing in an Affair, in which both the Interest and the Honour of the Nation is so much concerned, in order to prevent all unnecessary Delays, and to satisfy the World that this Nation does not tamely put up such Injuries.’

Mr Conduit.

Hereupon Mr Conduit * replied to Sir Thomas Aston:

Sir.

* Master-Walker of the Mint.

Sir,

Anno 5. Geo. II.
1732-33.

' I find there is a very great Mistake in Prejudice to the worthy Gentlemen our Commissaries in Spain: I must do them the Justice to declare, that to my Knowledge they very much despise the Salaries they have from the Publick, and are pushing as much as possible the Accommodation of all the Affairs referred to them, in order that they may return home to look after their private Affairs. I am very sure that there is not one of those Gentlemen, who, for the Sake of the Salary would have gone out of the Kingdom, or who would stay one Month in Spain, or any where, for the Sake of enjoying so trifling a Benefit. It was the Hopes only of being serviceable to their Country, that prevailed on any of them to go thither, and they are doing as much as lies in their Power to render their Service as beneficial as possible to their Country; the sooner that Affair is brought to a Conclusion, the more beneficial will their Service certainly be. This I know to be the Case as to the Gentlemen that are employed, but if it were otherwise, his Majesty could certainly take Care, that no unnecessary Delays should be allowed in an Affair of such Consequence, and certainly will lay before this House an Account of all the Proceedings in that Affair as soon as it can be conveniently done; and therefore I must be of Opinion, that there is no Occasion for our presenting any such Address as has been moved for.'

To this Mr Pulteney answered.

Mr W. Pulteney,

Sir,

' We may always depend on it, that his Majesty will take all possible Care of this, as well as of every other Affair that regards the Honour or the Happiness of the Nation; but in all Affairs his Majesty must employ others under him, he must necessarily employ Ministers and other inferior Agents, to transact and manage the publick Affairs of the Nation; and as they may be dilatory or negligent, therefore it is the Duty, and has always been the Practice of this House, to inquire into the Management of Affairs of great Consequence. In the present Case I am for the Address proposed, because it will be a Spur to the Ministers, to procure as speedy and as ample a Satisfaction to our injured Merchants, as they can possibly get. Our having taken Notice, in the last Session of Parliament, of the Spanish Depredations, procured, I believe, those Commissions and Instructions, which were last Summer sent to his Majesty's Ships of War in the West Indies: That, I believe, was the chief Cause of sending some of our Ships to the Spanish Coast to demand Satisfaction for English Merchant-Ships, which they had violently taken, and unjustly confiscated. One of these Captains did accordingly, in Pursuance

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fuance of the Instructions he had received, send his Boat with his Lieutenant and some of his Sailors on Shore, to demand the Satisfaction propos'd; but the Spaniards were so far from complying with so just a Demand, that they added a new Affront, by making the Lieutenant and the Men Prisoners; whereupon he, like a brave, honest, downright English Captain, did what he ought to do, he seiz'd the first Spanish Ship he could meet with; but I have been since informed, that this Spanish Ship has been restored, tho' the English Ship has neither been restored, nor have the Owners met with any Satisfaction for the Damage and Loss they have sustained. How this came about, how we came to restore this Ship to them, before they had agreed to release our Ship, is more than I know, or can comprehend; for as they had done the first Injury, they ought, in my Opinion, to have been oblig'd to have made the first Reparation. As to the Gentlemen that are employ'd as our Commissaries in Spain, I do not know whether they despise their Salaries or not, but I am sure, if they continue as long in Spain as one Gentleman seems apprehensive they may, it will verify what I said in this House in relation to those Affairs, that it would have been better for the Nation, and more to the Satisfaction of the Sufferers, to have given up the Affair at first, and to have given the Sum of Money, which such Commission might have cost the Publick, to be divided among our Merchants, who had been robbed and plunder'd by the Spaniards; for even as it is, I am afraid that if the Charges which that Commission has already, and will stand the Publick in, were to be deducted from the Sum, which we may recover from the Spaniards by Way of Reparation, there will very little remain to be divided among the Sufferers.'

Sir R. Walpole.

Mr Pulteney having done speaking, Sir Robert Walpole observ'd, 'That wherever that honourable Gentleman got his Information, in relation to the Restitution of the Spanish Ship he made Mention of, to his Knowledge it was erroneous, for that at the same Time Orders were sent from hence for releasing the Spanish Ship, Orders were in like Manner sent from the Court of Spain, for releasing and restoring the English Ship and Cargo, which they had before taken; and that her not being restored was no Neglect, either at this or the Spanish Court, but owing to the Excuses and Delays of his Catholick Majesty's Governors in the West-Indies; who, notwithstanding express Orders from their Court for delivering up the Ship and Cargo, had found some new Pretences for delaying it.' To this Mr Plumer reply'd, 'That if the Case was, as the honourable Gentleman who spoke last was pleas'd to assure them, he could not but with Pleasure observe, 'That if ever a War should happen between Spain and

Mr Plumer.

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us, we must certainly get the better of them ; for that our Governors and Officers in the West-Indies are, it seem'd, most punctual and exact in observing and obeying the Orders and Instructions received from hence, even tho' they may be perhaps not much to their own private Liking ; whereas on the other Hand it appear'd, that his Catholick Majesty's Governors and Officers in those Parts had but little Regard to the exprefs Orders they received from him ; that King, it seem'd, having no Authority over his own Officers ; and consequently in Case of a War between us, we should have a very considerable Advantage over that Nation.'

At last the Question being put on Sir Wilfrid Lawson's Motion, it was agreed to without any Division ; and the Address was accordingly presented.

Feb. 16. Sir Conyers D'Arcey † reported his Majesty's Answer to the said Address, viz. " That although by the Treaty of Seville, the Commissaries on the Part of Great Britain and Spain were to meet within four Months after the Exchange of the Ratification of that Treaty, and their Commissions to continue for three Years from the Date of the said Treaty ; and altho' his Majesty's Commissaries were appointed on the 2d of April 1730, yet by several unforeseen Accidents, the Meeting of the Commissaries in Spain was so long delay'd, that the first Conferences were not open'd 'till the 23d of February 1732, N. S. And that as so much Time was elapsed before the opening of their Commissions, it has been since agreed between the two Crowns, that the three Years, for finishing the Commission of the said Commissaries, shall be computed from their first Meeting on the 23d of Feb. last ; which makes it impracticable for his Majesty to give the proper Orders, for laying a perfect Account before this House, of what is desired in their Address."

Feb. 21. The House resolv'd itself into a Committee of the whole House, to consider of the State of the Trade of his Majesty's Sugar-Colonies in America ; and Mr Winnington moved for a Resolution, ' That no Sugar, Paneels, Syrups, or Molosses, nor any Rum or Spirits, except of the Growth or Manufacture of his Majesty's Sugar-Colonies in America, should be imported into Ireland, but from Great Britain only.' This Motion was oppos'd by Mr Carey, * Member for Dartmouth, who said, ' That he would with all his Heart join in any proper Measures, that could be propos'd, for encouraging our Sugar-Colonies, but he could not agree to the altering the Laws as they then stood, with respect to the

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An Address agreed on.

The King's Answer thereto.

Mr Winnington moves, That no Sugar, Paneels, Syrups, Molosses, Rum, or Spirits, except from the British Colonies in America, be imported, but from Great Britain only.

Debate thereon.

† Comptroller of his Majesty's Household.

* Clerk of the Council, and Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

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the Importation into Ireland : That the allowing of Rum to be imported directly into Ireland from any of our Colonies in the West-Indies, was with Design to discourage as much as possible the Consumption of French Brandies in that Kingdom ; which Design would be entirely over-thrown by the Resolution proposed, if any new Law should now be made in pursuance thereof ; for if it should be made necessary to bring Rum to, and enter it in England, before it could be carry'd to Ireland, it would very much enhance the Price of that Commodity, by which the Consumption thereof would be discouraged and diminished, and the Consumption of French Brandies would consequently be increased : That he thought it was unreasonable to lay such a Restriction on the Trade to Ireland, because that Kingdom was a Part of our own Dominions, and contributed very considerably to the Riches and Power of England : That besides, if a Law should be made in the Terms of the Resolution proposed, it would probably embroil us with some of our Neighbours : That he did not know but the French would look upon it as a Breach of that Article of the Treaty of Utrecht, by which it was stipulated, that the Trade between France and us should remain on the same Footing it was on at that Time : That the Portugeeze would certainly look on it as a Breach of the Treaties of Peace and Commerce subsisting between us and them, because, by such a Law the Importation of Portugal Sugars directly into Ireland would be expressly prohibited.' He was answer'd by Mr Scrope, Member for Bristol, who said in Support of the Motion, ' That as to the enhancing of the Price of Rum in Ireland, and thereby discouraging the Consumption thereof in that Kingdom, there was no such Consequence could ensue from the Resolution proposed, or from any Law that could be made in Pursuance thereof, because there might still be as much Rum, as was requisite for the Consumption in that Kingdom, imported directly thither from our own Sugar-Colonies in America ; what was proposed by the Resolution moved for, was only to prohibit the direct Importation of any of the Commodities mentioned therein, from any of the other Colonies in America, and we had very good Reason for making such a Prohibition, because it appeared that what was imported directly into Ireland from the other Colonies, was generally the Produce of the Foreign Sugar-Colonies in that Part of the World, whereby the Trade of those Colonies was very much encouraged and improved, to the Ruin of our own Sugar-Colonies in America : That though we were to look upon Ireland as a Part of our own Dominions, yet we ought not to allow them to encroach upon any Branch of the Trade of England : It was very well known that they were always endeavouring

Mr Scrope.

endeavouring to encroach upon our Trade ; and if we did not take Care to keep that Country under the Yoke, they might in Time grow so rich as to be able to throw it off, which they would perhaps willingly do, if ever it should happen to be in their Power : That as to Portugal, some Words might be put in, or some proviso added, for obviating any Exception that might be taken by them.' Hereupon Mr Doddington said, ' That he was sorry to differ from his honourable Friend that sat by him, but that he had always look'd on Prohibitions in Trade as of dangerous Consequence, and that therefore no Prohibitions ought ever to be laid on it, but such as are in their own Nature absolutely necessary : That we had no Reason to be jealous of Ireland, or to lay them under any Restraints and Prohibitions ; that Country had always appeared loyal and zealous for his Majesty, and for the present Royal Family ; they had generally behaved as good Subjects, at least for many Years last past ; and he believed the best Way to keep them so, was to give them all proper Encouragement, and to shun as much as possible the laying them under any particular Restraints or Disadvantages : That he looked on that Kingdom in a very different Light from what some other Gentlemen seem'd to view it in ; the People thereof he always consider'd as a Part of ourselves, and he hoped they, or at least the most of them, never did, nor ever would look upon themselves as being under any Yoke, but that of the Government, and the Laws of their Native Country.' Mr Horatio Walpole observ'd next, ' That as to what was propos'd by the Regulation mov'd for, he could perceive nothing therein contrary to the Treaties of Peace and Commerce subsisting with Foreign Powers ; 'twas a Regulation of Trade only within our own Dominions, and had no Relation to that of our Neighbours : That if we were to prohibit the Importation of any one of their Commodities into any Part of the British Dominions, they might perhaps have Reason to take it amiss ; they might say, that such a Prohibition was an Infringement of some of the Stipulations subsisting between us ; but what was now propos'd, was not a general Prohibition, it was only the appointing of such particular Places within our own Dominions for the Importation of such Commodities, and prohibiting the importing of them at some other Places : That as this regard'd only our Trade among ourselves, no foreign Power could take any just Exceptions thereto ; but however, since there was no Design of prohibiting the Importation of French Spirits, or Portugal Sugars, directly into Ireland, therefore he would propose an Amendment, and that the Resolution should be in the Terms following, ' That no Sugar, Paneels, Syrups, or Molasses, of the Growth, Product, or Manufacture of any of the Colo-

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1732-33.

Mr Doddington.

Mr H. Walpole
moves for an A-
mendment to the
above Motion.

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Which is agreed to.

Farther Debate
relating to the
Trade of the Su-
gar-Colonies.

Mr. Winnington.

Col. Bladen.

Sir J. Barnard.

nies or Plantations in America; nor any Rum or Spirits of America, except of the Growth or Manufacture of his Majesty's Sugar-Colonies there, be imported into Ireland, but from Great Britain only.' The Resolution being thus amended, it was agreed to without any Division; and then Mr Winnington stood up again, and mov'd, 'That a Duty of 4 s. *per* Hundred Weight, Sterling Money, be laid on all foreign Sugars and Paneels, imported into any of his Majesty's Colonies or Plantations in America.' This was agreed to without any Opposition. Then Colonel Bladen made the two following Motions, viz. I. 'That a Duty of 6 d. *per* Gallon, Sterling Money, be laid on all foreign Molosses and Syrups imported into any of his Majesty's Colonies or Plantations in America: And II. That a Duty of 9 d. *per* Gallon, Sterling Money, be laid on all foreign Rum imported into any of his Majesty's Colonies or Plantations in America.'

Hereupon Sir John Barnard, in Opposition thereto, said, 'That as the Trade then stood between our Northern Colonies and the French Sugar Islands, it appeared, that our Colonies bought Molosses of them at a very low Price, and distilled them into Rum, by which they provided themselves at a small Charge with the Rum that was necessary for them in their Trade with the Indians, and in their Fishing-Trade; they had, it was true, most of the Materials for making this Rum from the French; but then the Manufacture was all their own, and thereby a great many of our Subjects in that Part of the World were employ'd and maintain'd: That by laying such an high Duty on French Molosses, we should lay them under a Necessity of manufacturing it themselves, so that our Subjects would lose all that Employment, and instead of buying Molosses in their natural Drefs from the French, as they did formerly, they would be obliged to purchase the same Molosses manufactured into Rum, whereby the French Sugar-Islands would take of them at least three times the Money they took formerly: That as Molosses was a bulky Commodity, it would not be easy to run them into any of our Northern-Colonies, so that the French would be laid under an absolute Necessity of manufacturing them into Rum, and when manufactured into Rum, it would be easy to carry that Rum, and sell it in a Smuggling Way to our Fishing-Vessels at Sea, and even to run it into every one of our Colonies on the Continent of America: That the Sea-Coasts belonging to us in that Part of the World were of such a vast Extent, and so many little Harbours and Creeks to be every where met with, the Roads so little frequented, and the Towns so open, that it would be impossible to prevent the Running of French Rum on Shore, or the conveying it from
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one Town to another after it is landed: No, not even if we should send thither the whole Army of Excise-Officers which we have here at home; the sending them thither might, indeed, add a good deal to our Happiness in this Country, but all of them together could be of no Service for such a Purpose in that Country: That as to the laying a Duty both on foreign Rum and Molosses, he would not be altogether against it, but then it ought to be only a small Duty, for the sake of giving an Advantage to our own Sugar-Colonies in that Respect, not such an high Duty as was in a manner equal to a Prohibition; for that was really granting a Monopoly to our Sugar-Islands, with respect to a Commodity that is absolutely necessary for our Northern-Colonies, both in their Fishing-Trade and in their Trade with the native Indians; and as the French were our Rivals likewise in both those Trades, we were about giving them a certain Advantage as to these Trades, and that without doing them any Harm as to their Sugar-Trade; for if they sold Sugar and Rum cheaper than our Colonies did, they would have Vend enough for all they could make; they would have a stolen Market for it in the British Dominions, and an open Market in all other Parts of the World.' To this Colonel Bladen answer'd, 'That he had often heard our Army of Excise-Officers set in a very terrible Light, and represented as of the most dangerous Consequence to the Liberties of the Nation, but now he heard it urged that this whole Army would not be able to reduce our Northern-Colonies; and he was sure, if they were not, there was no Fear of their being able to reduce this Nation: But without sending any of that Army to America, he hoped there would be no such Thing as Smuggling in that Part of the World; it was to prevent such a pernicious Practice, that he proposed only laying a Duty on foreign Rum; he did not propose a Prohibition, and the Duty he had proposed was no higher, than what was absolutely necessary for putting our own Sugar-Islands on an equal Foot with the French.' Sir John Barnard reply'd, 'That he had said, that our whole Army of Excisemen would not be able to prevent the Running of French Rum in that Country; he did not talk of reducing the Country, he had not so much as mentioned the Word, but he believed it would be much easier to reduce the Country, than to prevent the Running of French Rum in it, in case what was then proposed should take Effect: That if the Gentleman really meant to prevent Running, he was very unfortunate in what he had proposed, for he had proposed the only Method that could be thought on, for setting up and encouraging the Smuggling-Trade; which was that of laying on a high Duty, equal to, if not above, the

Col. Bladen.

Sir J. Barnard.

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Six Resolutions re-
lating to the Sugar-
Colony Trade ;

Sir J. Barnard.

first Price of the Commodity upon which it was laid.' Then the Question being put, the three foregoing Motions were severally agreed to without any Division. After this, the two following Motions were agreed to without any Opposition, I. 'That all the Duties charged on the Importation of all Sugars and Paneels of the Growth, Product and Manufacture of his Majesty's Colonies and Plantations in America, into Great Britain, be drawn back on Exportation of the same.' II. 'That a Drawback or Allowance of 2 s. per Hundred Weight on all Sugars, refined in and exported from Great Britain, be paid on the Exportation thereof, over and above all Drawbacks or Bounties now payable thereon,' This last Resolution was seconded by Sir John Barnard, who said, 'That he would agree to that as well as the other Resolution with all his Heart, for that the two last were the only Resolutions they had come to, which, in his Opinion, would be of any real Use to our Sugar-Colonies ; and particularly the last Resolution he was glad to see moved, because he hoped it would make them think of some other Things relating to our Trade, which stood in need of some such Redress from Parliament: That there were several foreign Materials imported into this Kingdom, liable to Duties on Importation, which Duties were drawn back, if the Materials were again exported in the same Shape ; but if manufactured and made more valuable by the Labour of our own People, neither the Merchant nor the Manufacturer could draw back the Duties, even though they should afterwards export the same, and could shew that this Manufacture was made of Materials that had paid a Duty on Importation ; and would have had a Drawback on Exportation, if they had been carried out rough as they were brought in : That this was a scandalous Oversight when these Duties were first imposed, but it was much more scandalous that in so long a Time this Oversight had never been amended : That there were several Examples of this Oversight could be given, but he would then only mention the Duties on foreign Hemp, Flax, Cordage, &c. which were drawn back if the Goods should be exported in the same Condition they were imported : But if these very Goods should, by the Labour and Industry of our own People, be manufactured into Cables, Ropes, and other Tackle for Shipping, and then exported, the Exporter could not have any Drawback : That this was a great Loss to that Branch of our Trade, which was a very considerable Branch, but would be much more considerable if it were not for this Hardship it laboured under.'

These Resolutions being all agreed to as above recited, a Bill was ordered to be brought in pursuant thereto, which afterwards passed into a Law.

A Bill passed in
To Justice thereof.

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The same Day the Pension Bill was read the third Time and pass'd; and Mr Sandys was ordered to carry it up to the House of Lords, where it met with the same Fate as in the two last Sessions.

Feb. 23. The House resolv'd itself into a Committee of the whole House, to consider farther of Ways and Means for raising the Supply; the Account of the Money then remaining in the Exchequer, and of the Produce of the Sinking-Fund disposible by Parliament, having with others been referred to the said Committee, Sir Robert Walpole stood up, and spoke as follows;

Sir,

'In the last Session of Parliament, this House came to a Resolution, which, in my Opinion, was a good and most reasonable Resolution; and that was to ease the Landed Interest of one Shilling in the Pound upon the Land-Tax, by granting in Lieu thereof, a Duty on Salt for three Years. [See p. 236] By this the Landed Interest, which has for so many Years borne so great a Share of the Publick Expence, has in this last Year found a most sensible Ease; and if any Method can be fallen on for continuing this Ease to them, such Method ought certainly to be followed. As I had, last Session of Parliament, the Honour of moving for that Resolution, the Approbation I then met with encourages me now to offer to your Consideration another Motion, which I hope will be equally agreeable, and that is, that it may be resolv'd, 'That it is the Opinion of this Committee, that towards raising the Supply granted to his Majesty, there be issued and applyed the Sum of 500,000 l. out of such Monies as have arisen from the Surplusses, Excesses, or Overplus Money, commonly called the Sinking-Fund, over and above what hath been applyed to the Payment of one Million, towards discharging the National Debt, pursuant to an Act of the last Session of Parliament.' This Motion, I hope, will meet with the Approbation of this House; for it has always been my Opinion, and I believe it will be granted by every Man, that the Publick Expence ought always to be raised according to that Method, which is the least burthenfome to the People: By this Method we shall provide for a great Part of the current Service of the Year, without laying any Burthen whatever on the People, and without doing Injustice to any Man, or to any Set of Men: The Case of the Creditors of the Publick is now very much altered from what it was; the Competition among them is not now which of them shall be first paid, but which of them shall be the last to be paid; and therefore Gentlemen need not now apprehend, that any of the publick Creditors will look upon the House's agreeing to this Motion as an Injustice

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The Pension-Bill passes the Commons, and is again lost in the House of Lords.

Sir. R. Walpole's Motion for issuing 500,000 l. out of the Sinking-Fund, for the Service of the Year 1733.

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Debate thereon.

Mr W. Pulteney.

Injustice done them, or as any Hardship put upon them; on the contrary, they will look upon it as a Favour, and would be glad that a much larger Part of that Fund were to be apply'd in the same Manner. This Motion ought the rather to be agreed to, more especially by those who have a Regard for the Landed-Interest, because we can thereby continue to the Landed-Gentlemen that Ease which we granted them last Year; whereas if this Motion shall appear not to be agreeable to the Committee, then I, or some other Member of this House, must move for a Land-Tax of Two Shillings in the Pound, there not being, so far as I know, any other Way or Means left of providing for the current Service of the Year.'

This Motion occasioned a long Debate, and Mr William Pulteney hereupon made the following Speech:

Sir,

' Though I was aware of the Motion now made by the honourable Gentleman sitting near me, yet I was in Hopes that what he has now moved for, was not all he was to open this Day to the Committee we are now in; and therefore I shall conclude with a Motion of a different Kind from what the Gentleman has been pleased to make to us. But, Sir, there is another Thing, a very terrible Affair impending! A monstrous Project! Yea, more monstrous than has ever yet been represented! It is such a Project, as has struck Terror into the Minds of most Gentlemen within this House, and into the Minds of all Men without Doors, who have any Regard to the Happiness or the Constitution of their Country, I mean, Sir, that Monster, the Excise! That Plan of Arbitrary Power, which is expected to be laid before this House in the present Sessions of Parliament. This, I say, is expected, and therefore I am for having the Whole of that Gentleman's Designs laid before this Committee at once, and a sufficient Time given for us to consider the Whole, before we come to a Resolution on any Part.

' Of late Years Gentlemen have been led, I do not know how, into a new Method of proceeding in Parliament, a Method very different from what our Ancestors did always observe. In former Times, the general or particular Grievances were first examined, consider'd, and redress'd in Parliament, before they enter'd upon the granting of any Supplies; but lately we have been led into a Method of granting all the Money necessary for the Publick Service, among the first Things we do. The Malt-Tax Bill, the Land-Tax Bill, and such Bills, are now in every Session the first Things that appear upon the Journals of this House; and when these Things are finished, the Gentlemen in the Administration generally look on the whole Business of the Session to be over.

If this House should then enter upon any disagreeable Inquiries into Grievances, we might then perhaps be told, that the Season was too far spent ; that it was necessary for Gentlemen to return home to mind their private Affairs ; we might probably be obliged to defer to another Session, what the Welfare of this Nation required to be determined in the present. I hope Gentlemen will consider this, and that they will again begin to follow the wise Method observed by our Ancestors, and keep some Security in our own Hands for our Sitting, 'till we have heard and redressed all the Grievances of our Fellow-Subjects. There are several Things which we ought to examine into, before this Session shall be concluded. Does not every Gentleman know ? Does not every Gentleman expect that there is an Application to be made to us from the South-Sea Company ? That Company has now made Choice of a Set of honest Proprietors to be the Directors of their Affairs ; they are inquiring into the State of that Company's Affairs, and they must inquire into the Management of their Affairs for some Time past : In both these they will stand in need of a Parliamentary Relief, and in both it ought to be granted them.

' The honourable Gentleman addresses himself in a very particular Manner to the Landed Interest ; I hope every Gentleman in this House has a Regard for the Landed Interest ; but I hope the Landed Gentlemen of this House are not to be bully'd into any Ministerial Jobs, by telling them, that if they do not agree to such a Motion, a Land-Tax of Two Shillings in the Pound must be moved for. I hope, Sir, the Landed Gentlemen will never be induced to consent to any Thing that may undo the Nation, and overturn the Constitution for so small a Bribe, so trifling a Consideration, as that of being free from the Payment of One Shilling in the Pound Land-Tax, and for one Year only. The Landed Gentlemen of this Nation have often ventur'd their All in their Country's Cause ; and it is an Indignity offer'd to them, to imagine, that paying or not paying such a Trifle as One Shilling in the Pound Land-Tax, will be of any Weight with them, when it comes in Competition with the Welfare and Happiness of their Country.

' The Sinking-Fund, that sacred Deposit for extinguishing the Debts and abolishing the Taxes, which lie so heavy on the Trade and the People of this Nation, ought never to be touched ; no Consideration whatever ought to prevail with us to convert that Fund to any Use, but that for which it was originally design'd. It has of late been too often robb'd ; I beg Pardon, Sir, Robbing is a harsh Word, I will not say robb'd ; but I must say, that upon several Occasions there have been considerable Sums snipped away from it : Upon
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the Demise of his late Majesty, a large Sum was taken from the Sinking-Fund, and apply'd to the Civil-List: By the taking off the Salt-Duty, another large Yearly Sum was taken away from that Fund; and the People are now again charged with that Duty, but no Restitution has been made to the Sinking-Fund. Thus, Sir, there has been already a very large Sum taken from it at several Times, and now it is propos'd to snip off it 500,000 l. at once. At this Rate, the People of this Nation must for ever groan under the Load of Taxes they are now subject to; and our Trade, as long as we have any left, must labour under the Difficulties and Discouragements it is now expos'd to. Is this consistent with the Welfare or Happiness of the Nation? Is this the Method by which the Landed-Gentlemen are to be eas'd of One Shilling in the Pound Land-Tax?

'The honourable Gentleman has been called, and once had the Vanity to call himself, the Father of the Sinking-Fund; but if Solomon's Judgment was right, he who is thus for splitting and dividing the Child can never be deemed to be the true Father. He may claim, and I shall allow him the Honour of being the Father of two other Children lately brought forth in this Nation, a Standing-Army, and an Excise; but as for the Sinking-Fund, he seems now to renounce all Pretences of being the Father thereof. I shall not now enter farther into the Merits of the Motion that the honourable Gentleman has been pleas'd to make, because I hope a proper Time will be allow'd for Gentlemen to consider of a Question of so great Consequence; and therefore I shall conclude with a Motion for the Chairman to leave the Chair.'

Sir R. Walpole.

Hereupon Sir Robert Walpole stood up again, and made the following Reply.

Sir,

'As for the Gentleman's saying, that I had once the Vanity of calling myself the Father of the Sinking-Fund, I must say, that whether I was vain of being thought so or no, I remember a Time when the establishing that Fund was treated as a monstrous Project, and then I was oblig'd to father it; but no sooner was it found out to be a good and a right Thing, and a Project that was both feasible and agreeable to the Interest of this Nation, but other Gentlemen endeavour'd to rob the real Father, whoever he was, of the Glory of being the Father of that Child. As for the other monstrous Project so much talk'd of, which some Gentlemen now endeavour to shew in so terrible a Light, I doubt not but that in a little Time it will appear in a quite different Shape to the impartial and unprejudiced Part of the Nation: Let it be what it will, I am resolv'd to propose it; and if I have but a very little Time, I shall lay it before you for
your

your Consideration : I have no Doubt, but that upon a thorough Examination, it will be found to be for the general Interest of the Nation, and for the Advantage of every fair Trader in particular ; and this I am so much convinced of, that I believe I may live to have it told me, that I was not the Father of it, but that other People had thought of it before me. I never as yet was inclined to do that which I thought was ill ; I am afraid of doing so ; but I never shall be afraid of doing well ; I never shall be afraid of doing Good, either to my Country, or to private Men, so far as is consistent with the Interest of my Country. As for the Sums which have been taken from the Sinking Fund, and added to the Civil-List, they were not taken from it by me, they were taken from it by the Authority of this House ; I was only one of those who consented to it ; and particularly as to the Sum which was taken from the Sinking-Fund upon the Demise of the late King, and given to the Civil-List, the honourable Gentleman, who sits near me, agreed to it as well as I did ; both of us did agree to it, but our Motives for agreeing were perhaps very different.

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‘The Sinking Fund was established for the Payment of the Debts of the Nation, but still it was left subject to the Disposal of Parliament ; if upon any Occasion it shall appear that a Part of it may be more properly applied to some other Use, the Legislature has certainly a Power to apply it in that Manner, which they shall judge to be most for the Publick Good, and for the Interest of the Nation in general. This is the proper Question now under our Consideration ; we are now to determine, Whether the Sum of 500,000 l. shall be apply’d this Year towards the Ease of the Landed Interest, where it is very much wanted, where it is absolutely necessary to give some Relief ; or if the whole shall be this Year applied towards the Payment of the publick Creditors, who stand in no need of such Payment, who do not so much as wish or desire it. This is the plain State of the Question ; and I could hardly have expected that this would have stood a Debate.’

Sir John Barnard spoke next.

Sir J. Barnard.

Sir,

‘As to the Project, which the honourable Gentleman on the Floor seems to be afraid of being robb’d of the Glory of, I believe he may be very easy in that Respect ; for whatever he has met with in other Cases, he need not be under any Apprehensions as to this ; for my Part, I am so far from believing that, when it appears in Publick, it will procure either Honour or Glory to the first Projector, whoever he be, that I am firmly convinced it will turn out to his eternal Shame and Dishonour ; and that the more the Project is ex-

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amin'd, and the Consequences thereof consider'd, the more the Projector will be hated and despised.

'But as to the Question now before us, it affords me a most melancholy Consideration; I own that the Landed Interest, as well as every other Interest, stands very much in need of Relief; I allow that, by what the Gentleman now proposes, the Landed Interest may meet with some immediate Ease; and I will likewise easily grant, that it may, in our present Circumstances, be agreeable to the Creditors of the Publick; but while I have the Honour to be a Member of this House, I am not to consider the immediate Ease of the Landed-Interest in particular, nor the present Pleasure of the Publick Creditors; I am to consider the Welfare of the Nation in general, both as to the present and as to future Times; and as I am convinced that what is now proposed will, in the long Run, be contrary to the Interest of the Nation in general, I therefore must give my Dissent thereto.

'In all Affairs which come before this House, we are to have a due Regard to Posterity; we are in Honour and Duty bound to consider the future Happiness of the Nation, as well as the present; and the Question now before us is, Whether we shall give a present Ease to the Landed-Interest of One Shilling in the Pound Land-Tax, by unjustly loading our Posterity with the Payment of 500,000 l. and the Interest thereof from this present Year? Or, whether we shall continue to pay the One Shilling in the Pound Land-Tax, and thereby free the Nation of a Debt of 500,000 l. and ourselves and our Posterity of a new Debt of 20,000 l. which must be yearly incurred by this Nation, for the Payment of the Interest upon that Debt, 'till the principal Sum be satisfy'd and paid. This is the Question before us, and every Man, who has a Regard to Posterity or to the future Happiness of his native Country, must easily determine what Side he is to take: This is the Light it ought to be considered in; and whoever considers it in this Light, must conclude, that what is proposed is robbing our Posterity of 500,000 l. and the growing Interest thereof, for the sake of a trifling present Ease to ourselves. If the Landed-Interest, or any Interest, could be relieved by reducing the Publick Expence, it would redound to the Glory of him who had the Honour of being the Author thereof; but to ease ourselves by loading our Posterity, is a poor temporary Expedient of short-sighted or self-interested Politicians; and the Author of such an Expedient must expect the Curses of Posterity, and can never expect present Thanks from any, but such as are as short-sighted or as self-interested as himself.

'I hope I shall not now be taxed with affecting Popularity, or with speaking Provincially, or as a Member for the City

of London, as I have oftē been upon other Occasions; for as to the present Question, I consider it entirely in a National View. As a Member of this House, I shall always look upon myself as one of the Representatives of the People of Great Britain, and I hope every Gentleman, who has the Honour of being a Member of this House, will always do the same. I hope it will never be in the Power of any Man, to make the Landed-Interest range themselves in Opposition to the Trading-Interest of this Nation; but if ever such a wicked Design should take Effect, if the Members of this House should ever be brought to talk and to vote Provincially, or as Members for Cities or Boroughs, or Members for Counties; if the former were to join together against the latter, it is easy to determine on which Side the Majority would be. The honourable Gentleman, who made the Motion, now seems to aim at the Affectation of Popularity among the Landed-Gentlemen of this Kingdom; this I am really surprized at, considering how often he has taxed me, and other Members of this House, with the Affectation of Popularity, as a most heinous Crime.

‘The Creditors of the Publick are, perhaps, at present unwilling to be paid off, because they have a greater Interest for their Money from the Publick, than they can have any where else; this is one Reason, but not the principal Reason for it; for the chief Reason is, the Method and Manner of paying them. If a considerable Part of their Debts were to be paid at once, and a reasonable Notice given to them of such Payments being to be made, they could then make such an Arrangement of their Affairs, as to dispose of their Money to as good an Advantage for themselves, and much more to the Advantage of the Trade of this Nation: But in the present Method of paying them, the Payments are so small, and the Warning so short, that many of them do not well know how to dispose of the small Sums they receive, and therefore they are unwilling to receive any in that Manner: However, let their Inclinations be how they please, it is certainly the Interest of the Nation to have them all paid off, the sooner it is done, the happier it will be for the Nation; and therefore no Part of what is appropriated to their Payment ought to be converted to any other Use: Their Unwillingness to receive Payment, is so far from being an Argument against paying them, that on the contrary it shews that they have a better Bargain from the Publick, than they can in the same Way have from any other Person; and therefore if it were possible to borrow Money at a lower Interest, if it were possible to add to the Sinking-Fund, the Publick ought certainly to do it, in order to pay off those who are now Creditors of the Publick at so high a yearly Interest.

Anno 6. Geo. II.

1732 33.

‘ I hope it will be thought that I am sincere in what I say, since I am in every Respect talking against my own private Interest ; I have a Part of my Estate in Land, otherwise I could not have a Seat in this House ; and as a Landholder, I ought, if I considered my own private Interest, to be for the reducing of the Land-Tax. I have another Part of my Estate in the Publick Funds ; and consequently I ought to be as fond as other Men of not being paid off, and of having as high an Interest as I can possibly get from the Publick ; and the remaining Part of my Estate I have in Trade, as to which also I speak against my own Interest ; for as a Trader I ought to be against the paying off of the Publick Funds, because the Interest of Money will be thereby reduced. Though it may seem a Paradox, yet it is certain, that the higher the Interest of Money is in any Country, the greater Profit the private Trader will always make ; for in a Country where the Interest of Money is high, the Traders will be but few, the general Stock in Trade will be but small, but every Man, who is a Trader, must make a great Profit of what Money he has in Trade.’

Mr Danvers.

Then Mr Danvers, Member for Bramber, stood up in Behalf of the Motion made by Sir Robert Walpole, and said, ‘ That he was so far from seeing the least Inconvenience in what that honourable Member had proposed ; that considering how little Occasion there was for paying off any of the Publick Debts, he was surprized at his Modesty in asking so little from the Sinking-Fund ; That had he asked the whole, it would have been but reasonable to have given it, since it is for the Support of a Government, under which we enjoy so many Blessings : That the Landed-Gentlemen bore the greatest Share of the late War, by which all those Funds were created, out of which the Plumb-Men of the City of London have made most of their Estates : That the Landed-Interest having thus laboured long under the greatest Distress, they ought to embrace every Opportunity to give it some Relief.’

Sir W. Wyndham.

Then Sir William Wyndham spoke against the Motion :
Sir,

‘ Though I have the Honour to sit in this House as a Knight of a Shire, yet I look on myself as one of the Representatives of the whole Body of the People of England ; and therefore I shall never endeavour to find out a Distinction, between the Interest of the Landed-Gentlemen and that of the Nation in general ; such Endeavours I know to be vain, and whoever does endeavour it, will soon find himself disappointed in his Design. I know that since last Session of Parliament, it has been most industriously given about in the County, which I have the Honour to represent,

‘ O Gen-

‘ O Gentlemen ! The Knight of your Shire was against easing you of One Shilling in the Pound Land-Tax.’ Whether this was done with a Design to do me Service or Disservice, I shall not determine ; but if it was done with Design to do me a Disservice, I shall leave those who did it to brag of their Success. For my own Part, I am so conscious that my Behaviour in that Affair last Session of Parliament was right, that were I to plead Merit with my Constituents upon any one Vote I ever gave in this House, it would be upon my way of voting in that very Affair ; for I shall always be against sacrificing the publick Happiness of the Nation, or the Security of our Constitution, to any such mean and fordid Views as that of a little present Ease in the Land-Tax ; and I hope every Landed Gentleman, whom I have the Honour to represent, is now and always will be of the same Opinion.

Anno 6. Geo. II.

1732-33.

‘ The Sinking-Fund is a Fund I have always had the greatest Veneration for ; I look on it as a Sacred Fund, appropriated to the relieving the Nation from that Load of Debts and Taxes it now groans under ; I take it to be so absolutely appropriated to that Use, that if upon any pressing and unlook’d-for Emergency, we should be necessarily obliged to borrow a little from it, the same with Interest ought to be repaid by some Tax to be raised within the Year. I have, indeed, been always afraid that some enterprizing Minister might be tempted to seize upon it, or some Part of it, in Time of War ; but I little dreamt of seeing any Attempts made upon it in a Time of the most profound Tranquility. It is to me a melancholy Consideration to think of the present vast Load of the National Debt ; a Debt of no less than forty five Millions and upwards, and that all contracted since the Revolution ! This must be a melancholy Consideration to every Gentleman, that has any Concern for his Country’s Happiness ; but if the Motion now made to us shall be agreed to, how dismal will this Consideration be render’d, when we reflect upon the little Appearance that there will then be of this Debt’s ever being paid ? Is the publick Expence never to be lessen’d ? Are the People of England always to pay the same heavy and grievous Taxes ? Surely, Sir, if there is ever a Time to be looked for of easing the People of this Nation, the present is the Time for doing it : But when I reflect upon what was done last Session of Parliament, I am really afraid of proposing any Relief for the poor Manufacturers and Labourers of this Nation ; I do not think we can trust ourselves. The Salt-Duty was taken off by this House, as a Tax the most grievous to the Labourer and to the Poor of this Nation, and the Sinking-Fund was thereby diminished : For the Relief of the Poor we did consent to this Encroachment

Anno 5. Geo. II.

1732-33.

croachment on that Sacred Fund ; but that very Tax was again laid on, because some Gentlemen pretended to have found out, that the Landed Gentlemen of England were poorer than the Poor. At this Rate the whole Sinking-Fund may by Degrees be exhausted, and the Poor of the Nation not relieved from any one Tax they now groan under.

‘ Last Year the Salt-Duty was laid on for three Years, in lieu of One Shilling in the Pound Land-Tax for one Year, and this was pretended to be a Relief to the Landed Interest ; but it was then evidently made appear, that it was no Relief even to any Landed Gentleman in England, unless he was a Man of a plentiful Land-Estate ; and it was then also made appear, that the People of the Nation were to pay above a Million, for the 500,000 l. then saved in the Pockets of the Landed Gentlemen. And now this Year the Sum of 500,000 l. is to be taken from the Sinking-Fund, in lieu of One Shilling in the Pound Land-Tax ; this is likewise pretended to be a Relief, but, upon a strict Examination, it will be found to be much such another Relief as that of last Year. We are to save this Year in the Pockets of the Landed Gentlemen 500,000 l. but this Sum must hereafter be paid by the Nation some Time or other. If it be paid next Year, we then pay 520,000 l. for it ; if not till Two Years hence we pay upwards of 540,000 l. and if it is not paid till Fifteen or Sixteen Years hence, by computing Interest upon Interest which in such Cases must always be done, the Nation must then pay above a Million for the 500,000 l. Ease, now pretended to be given to the Landed Gentlemen. This is the least Sum that it will cost the Nation ; but if to this we add what might be saved by the abolishing of some of those Taxes, which now lie heavy upon Trade and which cost the Nation more in levying than the neat Produce ever amounts to ; then it will appear, that the Nation must be infinitely a greater Loser by this Ease now pretended to be given to the Landed Interest. Let any Landed Gentleman consider this, and at the same Time let him consider, that the Lands of Great Britain stand ultimately obliged to pay all the Debts we owe, in case our present Funds should fail, which they may probably do by the Decay of our Trade, if it continues long under the Difficulties it at present labours under ; let any Landed Gentleman, I say, consider this ; and then let him determine whether he and his Posterity owe Thanks to the Gentlemen, who now pretend to be so great Friends to the Landed Interest.

‘ What can those Gentlemen say, who are thus for loading Posterity ? Can they imagine that there will ever be a Time of more profound Tranquillity ? Can they imagine that there will ever be a less Occasion for Publick Expence ? Or can they

they imagine that our Posterity will be in much better Circumstances than we are? I am sure, if we suppose the last, we must shew more Regard to the Trade of the Nation than has been shewn for some Time past; we must think of relieving the poor Tradesmen and Manufacturers from the many and various Kinds of Taxes they now groan under; and we must avoid all Occasions of loading the Publick with the Payment of Interest, by providing within the Year for the current Service of the Year: To this the Motion now made is directly contrary; for the not paying off of an old Debt is the same with contracting a new; and subjects the Nation to the same Expence with respect to the Payment of Interest. But I shall not trouble Gentlemen any farther upon this Subject at present, because I hope we shall have another Day to consider of this Question; and therefore I shall conclude with seconding the Motion for the Chairman's leaving the Chair.'

Anna G. Geo. II.
1752-53.

Sir William Wyndham was answer'd by Mr Henry Pelham. Mr H. Pelham.

Sir,

'As other Gentlemen have their melancholy Considerations, so I have mine; the most melancholy Consideration I have is, that notwithstanding our having a Government, under which we enjoy our Laws, our Liberties, and our Religion, to the utmost Extent; yet it is absolutely necessary to put the Nation to a very great annual Charge, in order to support that Government against the Foreign Enemies of both our Constitution and Religion, supported and encouraged by our Factions and Divisions at Home: This is the Reason that we cannot, by a Saving in the publick Charge, give that Ease to the Landed Interest, which is become absolutely necessary to be given; and since we cannot, with any Safety to the Constitution, or to the present happy Establishment, give that Ease by a Saving in the publick annual Expence, we must therefore resolve to give it in that Manner which will be least burthensome to the People, and that I take to be the Method which is now proposed to us.

'Gentlemen may talk as they please of what was done in last Session of Parliament, but I can say that in all Places where I have since been, I have had the Pleasure of receiving the universal Thanks of the People, for the Ease then given to the Landed Interest; and whatever Gloss may now be put upon that Affair, yet I know that some Gentlemen, who appeared against it were heard to say at the Time that that Affair was first mention'd, 'This is a most damnable Project! It will please the Country too much, and therefore we must endeavour to render it abortive.' I will, indeed, do the Gentlemen the Justice to believe, that they then spoke

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

as they thought; and they then did what they could to prevent the Success of a Design, by which his Majesty's Administration has gained the Favour and the Esteem of the Generality of the Landholders in England.

' I have as great a Regard for Posterity and for the future Happiness of the Nation, as any Gentleman in this House; and therefore I shall never be against any Thing, that is absolutely necessary for conveying to Posterity the many Blessings we now enjoy under the present happy Establishment. What is now proposed is not a throwing of any new Load upon Posterity; it is only a disposing of that Money which always has been, and still is at the Disposal of Parliament: We have a Right to dispose of it, in that Manner which we think most conducive to the general Interest of the Nation; and what is now proposed is only an Exercising of that Right, and thereby granting an Ease to the most oppressed Part of his Majesty's Subjects, at a Time when there is no pressing Demand for applying the Money, either to that Use for which it was at first intended, or to any other Use whatever. This is a Question that, in my Opinion, requires no Time to consider of; it is granted by every Gentleman who has spoke in this Debate, that the Creditors of the Publick do not desire to have their Money; and it is likewise granted that the Landed Interest stand in great Need of Relief; it cannot therefore be doubted, but that the Parliament may, and ought to apply at least a Part of that, which is not so much as wished for by the Publick Creditors, to the Relief of those who are now in so great Distress, especially since no Relief can be given to them by any other Means; for which Reason, I shall be for agreeing with the Motion made by the honourable Gentleman near me.'

Mr Waller.

Mr Waller stood up next, and spoke against the Motion, as follows:

Sir,

' It is known, I believe, by every Gentleman in the House, that Scotland pays little or no Part of what is raised for the Use of the Sinking-Fund, and for the small Part they do, or ought to contribute towards that Fund, they have already receiv'd an Equivalent; so that by what is now proposed to us, that Part of the Nation is not to contribute a Shilling towards this 500,000 l. which is to be apply'd for the current Service of the Year: Now, I should be glad to know, by what Article of the Union they are to be free from paying any Part of so large a Sum, for the current Service of the Year. I find, by some Accounts call'd for, and now lying on our Table, that there has been but a very little paid by the People of that Part of
the

the Island, towards the Support of the Government ; and I believe that the little that has been paid, has generally been distributed away among themselves, in Pensions, Rewards, and Gratuities.'

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

Mr Taylor, Member for Petersfield observ'd, 'That there are some People in the Nation, who the more they owe the greater Advantage they make, and the richer they grow ; such are the Bankers: That by the Motion made to the House, one would imagine some Gentlemen took the Case of the Nation to be the same ; but for his Part, he could not think so, and therefore differ'd from the Motion.'

Mr Taylor.

Then the Question was put, That the Speaker should leave the Chair ; which being pass'd in the Negative, by 245 against 135, the Question was put upon the first Motion, and carry'd without any Division : After which it was resolv'd, without Opposition, That towards raising the Supply granted to his Majesty, the Sum of one Shilling in the Pound be laid upon Land for the Year 1733.

Sir R. Walpole's Motion for issuing 500,000l. out of the Sinking-Fund, for the Service of the current Year, agreed to in the Committee.

One Shilling in the Pound voted for the Land-Tax.

Feb. 26. The above Resolutions of the Committee were reported to the House ; and a Motion being made, for agreeing with the Committee as to the first Resolution, the same was oppos'd by Mr Sandys, who on that Occasion spoke as follows :

A Motion being made, for agreeing with the Committee in the Resolution relating to the Sinking-Fund, it occasions a fresh Debate.

Mr Speaker,

'Notwithstanding the long Debate that was in the Committee upon this Resolution, yet I cannot now let it pass without taking Notice of the bad Consequences it may be attended with. The perpetual Method heretofore, of providing for the current Service of the Year, has been to grant annual Supplies to be raised by Taxes which were granted for that Purpose, and consequently were granted only for one Year ; at the Expiration of that Year they were at an End, and none of the Officers of the Crown durst pretend to levy them any longer on the People : It would have been High Treason for any Officer to levy any such Tax, after the Expiration of the Year for which it was granted by Parliament. By this Method our Kings have always been under a Necessity of calling Parliaments frequently ; if the King wanted a Supply, there was not a Tax subsisting by Law, out of which he could get it, and therefore he was obliged to call a Parliament to grant him a new Supply, and to impose a new annual Tax for that Purpose ; of this Nature is the Land-Tax ; it has always been one of those Taxes which were granted for the current Service of the Year, and for that Reason has never been granted for more than one Year at a Time. But what are we now about to do ? We are going to depart from this laudable Method always observed by our Ancestors ; We are going to give up that

Mr. Sandys.

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Tax which we have always in our own Hands, and which we may grant or not as we see Occasion ; and in the room thereof we are going to substitute a Tax, or at least a Method of providing for the current Service of the Year, which we have not in our Power ; the Taxes by which the Sinking-Fund is raised, being all granted for ever, and may be levied on the People without any new Authority from Parliament. By this Method we clearly point out a Way, by which some future ambitious Prince may provide for the current Service of the Year, without the Assistance of Parliament ; from whence he may judge that Parliaments are unnecessary, and will certainly lay them aside as soon as he finds them troublesome. By those Taxes granted for the Sinking-Fund, which his Officers may levy according to the Laws in being, he finds himself provided of a Revenue sufficient to support his Government, without the Assistance of Parliaments ; and therefore he will resolve to govern without them, if they but once begin to thwart any of his Measures.

‘I know it will be told me, that it would be as illegal and criminal, to apply the Revenue of the Sinking-Fund to the current Service of the Year, without the Authority of Parliament, as it would be to levy Taxes without any such Authority : But there is a very great Difference between the two Cases ; in levying a Tax contrary to Law, every Officer employ’d knows that he acts with a Rope about his Neck, and therefore it would be difficult for the most powerful Prince to get Officers that would be employ’d in the levying such Taxes ; whereas in levying those Taxes appropriated to the Sinking-Fund, every Under-Officer acts according to Law, there is no Man guilty of any Crime as to the levying of them ; there are none guilty but a few of the chief Officers, who agree to or connive at the Misapplication.

‘Another material Difference there is between those two Cases. The levying of any Tax, contrary to Law, gives immediately the Alarm to the whole Nation both poor and rich ; every Man thinks he is robb’d of his Property, if he is obliged to pay the most trifling Tax, without the Authority of Parliament ; and as the whole People in the Nation would on such an Occasion take the Alarm, so it would be easy to stop such a Prince in the Beginning of his tyrannical Career, before he could have Time to fix himself in Arbitrary Power. But though an ambitious Prince and his Ministers should misapply the Produce of the Sinking-Fund, by converting it to the current Service of the Year, the Body of the People would be no ways alarmed ; they would not think themselves any way hurt, because they would find that they were not obliged to pay any Taxes, but those which they

knew

knew to be due by Law ; on the contrary, they would probably be well pleased with the new Sort of Government, because they would find themselves, for some Time at least, free from the Payment of those Taxes which had formerly been annually raised by Parliament ; and thus, before the Body of the People could be made sensible of the Tyranny they were under, the Arbitrary Power of the Prince would be established, and the Fetters of Slavery riveted upon the People. I cannot but dread the Consequences of the Resolution now before us, and therefore I could not let slip this Opportunity of again declaring my Dissent to it.'

Mr Shippen then rising up, Mr Danvers moved for clearing the Galleries of all such as were not Members, which being done accordingly, Mr Shippen made the following Speech.

Anno 6. Geo. H.
1732-33.

Mr Danvers moves
for clearing the
Galleries of all
Strangers.

Mr Shippen.

Mr Speaker,

' There was no Occasion for so great and solemn a Preparation for what I have to say ; but as I did not take the Liberty to give you any Trouble in the Committee, I will now beg Leave to say a few Words to the Question before us.

' I have, in many former Debates in this House, heard Parliamentary Faith often mention'd, and much insisted on. Particularly I remember, that last Session of Parliament, when it was proposed that Scotland should pay equally with England, towards a Duty which was then raised, or rather revived, and apply'd to the current Service of the Year, a certain honourable Gentleman told us, and insisted much upon it, that it was a Breach of Parliamentary Faith. I wonder to see that Gentleman, who was last Year so nice an Observer of Parliamentary Faith, now so forward for committing what I take to be a real Breach of Parliamentary Faith.

' I remember the Time when the Law, which we are now going to break through, was brought into this House ; I remember that the Gentleman, who brought it in, introduced it with the greatest Solemnity : He told us, that it was to be looked on as a Fundamental Law of the Realm, and that therefore it was to be always had in the greatest Reverence and Esteem ; that no Attempt was ever to be made for encroaching upon or altering it ; that it was a Law which was always to be deemed sacred ; and that the Surpluses or Excesses of the Funds thereby established were always to be religiously preserved, and appropriated to the paying off the Debts of the Nation. He then said, That it was upon the strict and religious Observance of this Law, that the Credit and the future Happiness and Glory of this Nation entirely depended ; and in pursuance of what he said, the Words of the Law were made very plain and express, ' That all the Excesses and Surpluses there mention'd, should be appropriated

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

‘ to the discharging the Principal and Interest of such National Debts, as were incurred before the 25th of December 1716, and were declared to be National Debts, and not provided for by Parliament, in such Manner as should be directed by any future Act, and to or for no other Use whatever.’

These are the Words of that Law, and by these Words it is plain, that the Sinking-Fund is not absolutely at the Disposal of Parliament; the Parliament may direct what Debts are to be paid off, but the Parliament cannot direct those Surpluses and Excesses to any other Use besides that of paying the National Debts before the Year 1716, without repealing that Law; and as all the Publick Creditors have as much a Right to have their Principal paid as their Interest, we certainly cannot divert that Fund which is appropriated for the Payment of their Principal, without their Consent, no more than we can divert those Funds which are appropriated towards the Payment of their Interest; it is a Breach of Parliamentary Faith in the one Case as well as in the other. It is to be presumed, that it was upon the Faith of this Law, that so many became soon afterwards Purchasers of our publick Funds, by which we have since been enabled to reduce the Interest payable upon them, and have thereby considerably increased this same Sinking-Fund; and can it be said, that Parliamentary Faith is observed towards those Purchasers, if without their Consent that Law be broke through, which was the greatest, perhaps the only Temptation for them to purchase?

‘ I am really surprized to hear Gentlemen argue as they do upon the present Subject; but I remember that the Author of, or at least he who brought in that Law, was a Country-Gentleman, and therefore I do not at all wonder to see a Minister of State endeavour to tear down any Monument, that was erected by a Country-Gentleman; but I would have Gentlemen reflect, that he that pulls down a Monument of Glory, erects thereby to himself a Monument of Infamy. For my Part, I have always been a Country-Gentleman in this House: I am afraid, afraid I ought not to say, for I desire to continue always to be a Country-Gentleman; and therefore I am for preserving entire and inviolated this Monument of Glory, which was erected by an honest Country-Gentleman; and for this Reason I cannot agree with the Committee in the Resolution now before us.’

Sir William Yonge spoke next:

Mr Speaker,

‘ As we had the Sentiments of most Gentlemen on the Subject now before us when in the Committee, I was in Hopes that the Resolution would now have been agreed to without any farther Debate, but I find it is otherwise. An honourable

honourable Gentleman over the way pretends to be in great Fear, and to dread dangerous Consequences from this Resolution ; but how he or any other Gentleman can be at present under any such Apprehension, I cannot comprehend ; there cannot be the least Reason, or so much as any Colour of Reason for such, as long as the present Royal Family possesses the Throne of these Kingdoms ; it can never be suspected that his present Majesty, or any of his illustrious Family, will ever think Parliaments useless, or make any Attempt for laying them aside ; such a Thing might, indeed, very probably happen, if by a Revolution, a Revolution I say for I shall never give it the Name of a Restoration, the Pretender to his Majesty's Crown, or any of his Descendants, should get the Possession of the Throne ; the Creditors of the Publick might then, indeed, despair of ever having either their Principal or their Interest ; they would then be told that none of the publick Debts ought to be paid, because they were all contracted without any legal Authority, and for keeping the rightful Heir from the Crown : Parliamentary Faith would then, indeed, be laughed at, and those Taxes, which are now appropriated and faithfully apply'd to the Payment of the publick Creditors, would then be all at once converted to the Support of Tyranny and Arbitrary Power.

Art. 6. Geo. II.

1732-33.

‘ This would certainly be the fatal Consequences of such an unhappy Revolution ; but how invidious is it so much as to suspect any such Design in his Majesty, or any of his Family who shall succeed to the Crown ; their Title, their Right to the Crown, flows from the Authority of Parliament, and entirely depends upon the Preservation of our present happy Constitution ; how then can it be supposed that they will destroy Parliaments, since by the Destruction of them, they would certainly destroy themselves ? But I find these groundless Jealousies and Fears are pretended not only in this House, but they are industriously spread through all Parts of the Nation ; for I had myself a Letter lately from the Corporation I have the Honour to represent, desiring me not to consent to any Extension of the Excise-Laws, because our Parliaments would be thereby render'd useless : This Letter came to me by the Post, but by whom it was wrote I do not know ; however, from thence I conclude, that it has been represented to the People in that Country, that if a certain Scheme now upon the Anvil should succeed, Parliaments would be render'd quite useless, and would be laid aside. The vulgar and the ignorant People may be possessed with such Fears ; such Pretences may be made use of among them, but I little expected to have heard any such Arguments made use of in this House.

‘ I am, indeed, surprized to hear it so much as insinuated
that

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1732-33.

that the present Resolution is any Breach of Parliamentary Faith, or that the publick Creditors have a Right to demand, that no Part of the Sinking Fund can be apply'd to any Thing but to their Payment. The Case of the Sinking Fund is very different from those Taxes which are appropriated towards the Payment of their Interest: It was upon the Faith of this last Appropriation, that they lent their Money, and therefore they cannot be diverted to any other Use without their Consent; but the Sinking-Fund was established long after, there was no Money lent to the Publick by any Man upon the Faith of that Fund; and therefore it is entirely at the Disposal of Parliament; the Legislature may convert it to any Use they please, without the Consent of any Man, or of any Body of Men; as to the Disposal thereof, we are under no Restraint but that of the Publick Good; and as I am convinced that what is proposed by this Resolution is the best Thing we can do for the Publick Good, therefore I shall be for agreeing with our Committee.'

Mr W. Pulteney,

To this Mr William Pulteney replied;

Mr Speaker;

'The Fears, which my honourable Friend has expressed, are most just and reasonable, however groundless they may at present appear to the Gentleman who spoke last. His present Majesty is known to us, we know that all his Designs are just and honourable, and we know that he will not allow himself to be misled by any guilty Minister; he is too good to think of trampling upon the Rights and Liberties of the Subject, for the Sake of protecting any high Criminal whatever: But we cannot certainly know what is to happen hereafter; we cannot depend on the Dispositions, the Humours, or the Designs of all the Princes, even of the present Royal Family, that may in Course succeed to one another. Who knows but a Prince not yet born may arise, even of the present Royal Family, who finding himself possess'd of a Revenue, which he may raise by virtue of the Laws in Being, and which he knows to be sufficient for the Support of his Government, without any Assistance from Parliaments, may from thence conclude, that Parliaments are useless to him, and therefore resolve to lay them aside? The present Royal Family has as good a Right to the Crown, as ever any Family had that way'd the Scepter of this Kingdom; their Right to the Crown no more depends upon Parliaments, than the Right of any former Royal Family ever did; and yet we know, that some of our former Kings have had Views of overturning the Rights and the Liberties of the People. The only Barrier against such Designs, is to take all proper Care that it shall never be in any future Prince's Power:

Power : This is what has hitherto preserved our Liberties, and this is our only Security in Time to come.

Anno 6. Geo. 11.
1732-33.

‘ The honourable Gentleman has, I do not know how, lugged the Pretender into this Debate ; I am sure the mentioning of that Bugbear was as foreign to the Subject in hand, as it ever can be to any Debate that can happen in this House : But is the Pretender the only Person we have to fear ? No, there is no Prince in Europe from whom we have less to fear than from him ; he has so little Power or Interest in this Nation, that our Liberties can never be in any Danger from him, and I hope the present Royal Family will always be so fully possessed of the Hearts and Affections of the People, that it never will be in the Pretender’s Power to do us any Harm. The only Hopes he can ever have must arise from the arbitrary Designs of the Prince upon the Throne, and therefore we ought carefully to avoid all those Measures, which may give a Foundation for the forming of any such Designs in Time to come.’

Sir William Wyndham spoke next against the Motion :

Sir W. Wyndham.

Mr Speaker,

‘ I Did not design to have given the House any Trouble this Day ; but such Insinuations are thrown out, and so often repeated by some Gentlemen in this House, as I cannot with Patience sit still and hear. I generally observe, that when proper Answers cannot be made to what Gentlemen advance, then Jacobitism is brought in ; and because some Gentlemen in this House take the Liberty to differ from others, therefore they must be taxed with the terrible Name of Jacobite ; I wish that Gentlemen would resolve for the future always to give us Arguments, and not Names, for the Support of their Opinions. For my own Part, I will leave it to the whole World to judge who most pursue the Principles of the Revolution, They who are for supporting the Government in that Way, which is most easy and least burthen some to the People ; or they who are for doing it in a Way, which is so odious and so burthen some to the whole Nation.’

‘ Whenever there are any just Fears of the Pretender ; if there ever shall happen to be any real Designs in his Favour, which I hope never will, then I shall do as I always have done, I shall shew by my Actions what my Principles are. I believe I stand in the Opinion of Mankind acquit of any Imputation of Jacobitism, as much as the honourable Gentleman over the way, or any Gentleman in this House ; and therefore, I as much despise that Imputation, as I despise being always a servile Assentator to every Thing proposed by the Administration. But as such Insinuations have been often thrown out against me in this House, I must let Gentlemen know, that it is a Treatment, which I think inconsistent with
the

Annæ 6. Geo. II.
1732-33

the Dignity of this House, and a Treatment which I will no longer bear with.'

Then Mr Shippen said :

Mr Shippen.

Mr Speaker,

' I believe I have no Occasion to make any Professions of what I am ; but I must take Notice that in private Life, any voluntary Securities, that may be granted to Creditors after the borrowing of their Money, are as binding upon the Grantor, and ought to be as religiously observed, as those that were granted at the Time the Money was lent : This is certainly the Case as to all private Affairs, and I cannot think but that the Case is the same with respect to publick Transactions. I do not know, but that some Gentlemen in this House may be offended at my so much as mentioning the Reign of King James II. yet upon the present Occasion I must mention it ; and the Observation I shall make is, that that unfortunate Prince took many wrong Steps, ran himself into great Difficulties, and at last lost his Crown, by following too implicitly the wicked Councils of a bad Minister ; and that very Minister most basely betray'd, and at last deserted his Master. One of the greatest Misfortunes of that Prince, and that which contributed most to his Overthrow, was his keeping up a Standing Army in Time of Peace ; he did it, indeed, without the Consent of Parliament, but he did it at his own Expence ; he did it without laying any Charge upon the People ; and he did it without Consent of Parliament, because he could not find a Parliament mercenary and corrupt enough to give their Consent.'

Sir R. Walpole,
Lord Tyrconnel.
Mr Wyndham.

The Resolution of
the Committee
agreed to.

Then Sir Robert Walpole and Lord Tyrconnel spoke in Favour of the Resolution ; and Mr Wyndham spoke against it. At last the Question being put, it was carry'd to agree with the Committee, without any Division : After which the Question was put upon the second Resolution, and agreed to without Opposition.

Debate concerning
a Call of the
House, in Expec-
tation of the Ex-
cise-scheme being
brought in.

Feb. 27. The Order of the Day for the Call of the House was read, and a Motion being made for adjourning it 'till that Day Fortnight, Sir John Rushout stood up, and spoke as follows :

Mr Speaker,

Sir J. Rushout.

' I do not rise up to oppose putting off the Call of the House 'till this Day Fortnight ; that I shall easily agree to : But there being, as I imagine, a certain Scheme or Project to be brought into this House, which seems to be of very great Consequence to the whole Nation, I wish that the Call of the House may be appointed to be about the Time, when that Scheme is to be laid before us. For my Part, I know nothing about it, I cannot tell when we are to have the Pleasure of seeing that famous Project ; but I wish that some Gentleman

Gentleman, who knows more of it than I do, would get up and fix a Day when he thinks it will be brought in, and then move that the Call of the House may be put off 'till that Day, or till some Day about that Time.

' We have been long in Expectation of seeing this glorious Scheme, which is to render us all compleatly happy ; we have waited for it with Impatience ever since the Beginning of this Session of Parliament ; we imagined, as had been insinuated to us in the preceding Session, that it was to come in lieu of the One Shilling in the Pound Land-Tax, as a Supply for the current Service of the Year ; but in this we are disappointed ; that Measure has, it seems, been alter'd, and we have seen this Ease as to the Land-Tax otherways supply'd. I do not know whether the Scheme itself has lately met with any Alterations or Amendments, but I hope, if it be to be laid before us this Session, that it will not be put off 'till towards the End of the Session, when Gentlemen are tired out with Attendance, and obliged to return home to mind their own private Affairs. If a Scheme of that Consequence be at all brought in, it certainly ought to be brought in when the House is full, that it may be consider'd, and approv'd or reject'd, by as many Members as can possibly be brought together. As soon as the Time for its being brought in shall be fixed, and the Call of the House accordingly appointed, then I shall take the Liberty to move for Letters to the Sheriffs, as has been often practis'd on the like Occasions.'

Hereupon Sir Robert Walpole stood up, and spoke as follows :

Sir,

' As to the Scheme mention'd by the honourable Gentleman who spoke last, it is certain that I have a Scheme which I intend very soon to lay before you. I am resolv'd very soon to make a Motion, for this House to go into a Committee of the whole House on something or another ; I have not, indeed, as yet fully determin'd what my Motion shall be, but I suppose it will be for this House to go into a Committee on the State of the publick Revenue, or on the Frauds committed in the collecting thereof, or on the Frauds committed in some particular Branch or Branches of the Revenue ; it must be, I believe, a Motion to some such Purpose : If the Call of the House be appointed for this Day Fortnight, I believe I shall be fully determin'd between this and that Time, and so be able to move for some such Committee ; the House may then appoint a Day for going into the Committee moved for, that so every Member may have Notice to attend if he pleases.

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

‘ I do not desire, I never did desire to surprise this House into any Thing, nor had, I thank God, ever any Occasion to use the low Art of taking Advantage of the End of the Session, for any Thing I had to propose or would propose to this House ; but when the House does resolve itself into some such Committee as I now mention, I will then lay before that Committee a Scheme which I have long thought of, which is, I am convinced, for the Good of the Nation, and which, if agreed to, will improve both the Trade of the Nation and the publick Revenue. I never had any Intention to propose it as a Supply for the current Service of the Year ; I was always sensible that no such Thing could be done ; but if it be agreed to, and if upon a Trial it be found to bring in any Addition to the publick Revenue, this House may then dispose of that Increase in the following Session of Parliament as they shall judge proper ; ’till then it cannot be appropriated, because ’till then it cannot be known what the Amount may be. When the Amount of the Increase of the Revenue thereby is once ascertained, that Increase may then be brought in Aid of the One Shilling in the Pound Land-Tax, and thereby that Ease may be continu’d to the poor Land-holders for Years to come, if so the future Parliaments shall think fit.

‘ As for the Scheme’s having receiv’d Alterations and Amendments, I do not know but it may ; I never thought myself so wise as to stand in no Need of Assistance ; on the contrary, I am always ready to receive Advice and Instruction from others, and I shall always be ready to add, to alter, or to amend any Thing I have thought of, by the Advice, and upon the Information of those who are conversant in such Affairs. As to the Scheme now talk’d of, I have not only examin’d it by myself as thoroughly as I could, but I have taken from others all the Assistance and Advice I could get ; and in all my Inquiries in relation thereto, I have chose to consult with those who, I knew, had a perfect Knowledge of such Affairs, and had no particular Interest in View, nor any private End to serve : From those who may have By-Ends of their own, I never can expect impartial Counsel, and therefore I have in this, as well as every other Affair, thought it ridiculous to ask their Advice. Such as it is, I shall be soon ready to lay it before you ; then I shall give you all the Information I have had in the Affair, and will be most ready to hear and receive all the Information or Instruction, that can be given by any Gentleman in this House.

‘ It is certain that there are daily very great Frauds committed in the collecting of the publick Revenue, and if any Way can be fallen on to prevent those Frauds, and to enable the Publick to receive what it is now justly and legally

intituled

intitled to, such a Project ought to be embrac'd, and the Author thereof, whoever he may be, would deserve the Thanks of his Country ; for it would not only be a great Advantage to the publick Revenue, but to every honest and fair Trader in the Nation ; because that wherever a Tax is laid on, and not collected regularly and duly from every Man subject thereto, it is really making the fair Trader pay to the Publick what the fraudulent Trader turns into his own private Pocket, and thereby the Smuggler is enabled to underfell the fair Trader in every Commodity he deals in ; by which all the fair Traders in the Nation must be at last ruin'd and undone.'

Anno 6 Geo. II.
1732-33.

To this Sir William Wyndham replied,
Sir,

Sir W. Wyndham.

' I have not the Honour of being let into the Secret of this extraordinary Scheme, I do not as yet know what it is ; but by all that I could ever yet hear of it, I believe, when it is laid before us, the Question thereon will appear to be, Whether we shall sacrifice the Constitution to the preventing of Frauds in the Revenue ? This I take to be a very material Question, and therefore I think it is absolutely necessary to have a full House ; for which Reason, I shall be not only for Letters to the Sheriffs, but also I hope that every Gentleman in this House will write to such of his Friends in the Country as are Members, and intreat them to give Attendance on that important Day.'

Sir John Barnard spoke next,
Sir,

Sir John Barnard.

' When the honourable Gentleman is prepared to lay his Scheme before us, I hope he will move for some General Committee ; if he does, I shall not give the House any Trouble ; but if he moves for a Committee to consider the Frauds in any particular Branch of the Revenue, I shall take the Liberty to oppose it, because there are Frauds in every Branch of the Revenue ; and perhaps I shall be able to shew, that there are as many Frauds in other Branches of the Revenue, as there are in those which the honourable Gentleman has a Mind now to take a particular Notice of. I must think that the attaching our Inquiries at present to the Frauds committed in any particular Branch, is like singling out a Deer from the Flock, in order to be hunted down ; she is to be the first Sacrifice, but the whole Flock are to be hunted down at last : This, I believe, is the Case, and if I have been rightly informed, this Scheme, in its first Conception, was for a General Alteration of the Method of collecting the publick Revenue : It was for a General Excise ; but that, it seems, was afterwards thought too much at once, and therefore we are now, I suppose to single out only one or two Branches, in

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

order that they may be first hunted down ; but the very same Reason, that may prevail with us to subject any one Branch of the Revenue to the Laws of Excise, may afterwards prevail with us to subject every Branch to those Arbitrary Laws ; and as such Laws are, in my Opinion, absolutely inconsistent with Liberty, therefore I must think that the Question upon this Scheme, even alter'd as it seems it is, will be, Whether we shall endeavour to prevent Frauds in the collecting of the Publick Revenues, at the Expence of the Liberties of the People ?

‘ For my own Part, I never was guilty of any Fraud ; I put it to any Man, be he who he will, to accuse me of so much as the Appearance of a Fraud in any Trade I was ever concern’d in ; I am resolv’d never to be guilty of any Fraud. It is very true, that these Frauds are a very great Prejudice to all fair Traders, and therefore I speak against my own Interest when I speak against any Method that may tend towards preventing of Frauds ; but I shall never put my private Interest in Ballance with the Interest or Happiness of the Nation : I had rather beg my Bread from Door to Door, and see my Country flourish, than be the greatest Subject in the Nation, and see the Trade of my Country decaying, and the People enslaved and oppressed.’

Mr H. Pelham.

Then Mr Henry Pelham said,

Sir,

‘ I wish this Scheme, be what it will, were laid before us ; for ’till it is, I believe we shall every Day be falling into some Debate or other about it, without knowing any Thing of it. I do not know where the honourable Gentleman, who spoke last, got his Information ; but as I have had the Honour to converse sometimes with those who always knew most of this Scheme, I can assure him that there never was any such Thing intended as a General Excise, nor was there ever any Design of making a General Alteration in the Method of collecting the Publick Revenue. But I shall not at present say any Thing farther upon the Subject, because I think it a little odd to enter into Debates about what we know nothing of.’

Mr Perry.

Then Mr Perry, Member for London, spoke in Vindication of the Merchants dealing in the Wine and Tobacco Trade : After which the Question was put, and the Call of the House was put off ’till that Day Fortnight ; and it was ordered, That no Member of the House should presume to go out of Town without Leave of the House : That no Leave should be asked for any Member to go out of Town, but between the Hours of One and Two : And that Mr Speaker should write circular Letters to the Sheriffs and Stewards of the several Counties of Great Britain, requiring

The Call of the House put off to the 13th of March, and the Sheriffs order'd to write to the Members to attend, &c.

ing the Attendance of the Members on that Day Fortnight ; and that the House would proceed with the utmost Severity against such Members as should not then attend the Service of the House.

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

Then Mr Sandys moved for the House to resolve, ' That such Members of that House, who should absent themselves without Leave of the House, should be reputed Deferters of their Trust, and Neglecters of that Duty they owed to that House and their Country.' Hereupon several Members got up, some of whom as was thought to have seconded this Motion ; but Mr Horatio Walpole was pointed to by Mr Speaker, who said, ' That he was against the Motion the honourable Gentleman had been pleased to make, as being a very extraordinary one, and such as there was then no Occasion for, and therefore he moved for the Order of the Day, which Motion was immediately seconded. Sir John Rushout then said, ' That the Motion his Friend [*Mr Sandys*] had made, was perhaps a little extraordinary, but it was upon a very extraordinary Occasion, and not without Precedent, and therefore he would be for it.' To this Sir William Yonge reply'd, ' That an honourable Gentleman [*Sir William Wyndham*] had said, ' That every Member ought to write to his Friends in the Country, and desire them to give Attendance ; but if the Motion then made should be agreed to, they might, in his Opinion, save themselves the Trouble, for that no Member then in the Country would think he had one Friend in the House, if any such Resolution should be made against him.' Hereupon Mr Sandys said, ' That what he had moved for, was so far from being without Precedent, that there was a Precedent for it very lately, and that was in the famous Case of Dr Sacheverel : That when that Affair was before the House there was such a Resolution made, and from thence it was that he took the very Words of the Motion he had then made.'

Mr Sandys moves to resolve, That such Members, who should absent themselves without Leave, be declar'd Deferters of their Trust ; which is oppos'd by Mr H. Walpole.

Debate thereon.

Sir J. Rushout.

Sir W. Yonge.

Mr Sandys.

Then the Question was put upon Mr Walpole's Motion for the Order of the Day, because of its having been seconded before Mr Sandys's Motion was seconded, and that being carried in the Affirmative, the other was dropp'd of course.

March 8. A Bill was brought in pursuant to the Resolutions of the House in July last, in relation to the Sugar-Colonies ; upon which Sir John Barnard opened to the House a Petition of Richard Partridge, Agent for the Colony of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations in America, against the said Bill ; and moved for Leave to bring it up, in which he was seconded by Mr Perry, but oppos'd by Sir William Yonge ; who stood up, and spoke as follows.

Debate concerning a Petition from Rhode-Island and Providence, against the Sugar-Colony Bill.

Mr Perry.

Sir W. Yonge.

Mr Speaker :

' The Petition, which the honourable Member over the way

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

way has now in Hand, is, I find, a Petition praying for Leave to be heard against a Bill now depending in this House, by which some certain Duties are to be laid on several Commodities mentioned in the Bill. I believe, Sir, it has been the constant Usage of this House for many Years, to receive no Petitions against Duties to be laid on ; but as there are none who understand better than you, Sir, the Practice of the House in such Cases, therefore I shall in this submit entirely to your Determination, and hope you will give us your Opinion thereupon. However, Sir, I must take Notice of another Thing, which I observe in the Petition as it has been opened by the honourable Gentleman : They therein tell us, that as to the Bill now depending before us, they apprehend it to be against their Charter. This, I must say, is something very extraordinary, and, in my Opinion, looks very like aiming at an Independency, and disclaiming the Authority and Jurisdiction of this House ; as if this House had not a Power to tax them, or to make any Laws for the regulating of the Affairs of their Colony ; therefore, Sir, if there were no other Reason for our not receiving their Petition, I should on this single Account be against giving Leave to bring it up.'

Lord Tyrconnell.

To this Lord Tyrconnell replied,
Sir,

' I cannot agree with the honourable Member who spoke last, for I shall never give my Vote for rejecting a Petition before I know what is in it ; and this I cannot know till I hear it read. The Question now before us, is not, Whether the Desire of the Petition shall be granted or no ? After the Petition is brought up and read to the House, we may then judge whether the Desire thereof be reasonable or not, and may accordingly grant or refuse it, but the refusing to have the Petition brought up and read to the House, seems really to be a Determining the Desire of the Petition to be unreasonable, before we know what it is ; and therefore, Sir, I shall be for having it brought up.'

Mr Winnington.

Mr Winnington spoke next.

Sir,

' I stand up to speak to Order and to the Method of Proceeding in this House ; it has been a Custom always observed in this House, not to receive any Petitions against those Bills which were brought in for the laying on of any new Duties ; I do not indeed say but that there may be some Instances to the contrary, but I am sure they are very rare, and never happened but upon some very extraordinary Occasion ; for if we were to receive all such Petitions there would be such Multitudes of them against every such Bill, that the Nation might be undone for want of an immediate Supply for the
Publick

Publick Use, while we were sitting to hear frivolous Petitions against those Bills brought in for granting that Supply. The honourable Gentleman near me took Notice of the Petitioners pretending, that the Bill now before us is against their Charter; I hope, Sir, they have no Charter which debars this House from taxing them as well as any other Subject of this Nation; I am sure they can have no such Charter; but if it were possible, if they really had such a Charter, they could not say that the Bill now before us were any Infringement of it, because the Tax, to be thereby laid on, is no Tax upon them, but a Tax which is to be laid upon the French only; and shall this House, Sir, receive any Petitions, or hear any Reasons that can be offered, for not taxing the French, more especially when the Tax to be laid upon them will most evidently tend to the Encouragement of our own Sugar-Colonies? I hope, Sir, no such Petition will ever so much as be allowed to be brought up or presented to this House.'

Hereupon Sir John Barnard answered,

Anno 6. Geo. II.

1732-33.

Sir J. Barnard.

Sir,

'The Petitioners do not pretend to say, that the Bill now depending is against their Charter, nor did I say any such Thing when I opened the Petition to this House; at least if I did, I am sure I did Injustice to the Petition, for the Words of it are, 'That they humbly conceive, that the Bill now depending, if passed into a Law, would be highly prejudicial to their Charter.' But, Sir, I am really surprized at the Method of Reasoning made use of by the two honourable Gentlemen, who have appeared against the bringing up of this Petition: One of the honourable Gentlemen says, that the Petitioners are aiming at an Independency, and are disowning the Authority of this House. This, Sir, in the present Case seems to be a very odd Assertion; is not their applying by Petition to this House, as direct an Acknowledgement of the Authority of this House, as can be made by Men? The other Gentleman says, that the Bill now before us is a Bill for taxing the French only; this seems to be as odd an Assertion as the other; Does the Gentleman imagine that the Tax paid in this Island upon French Wine, is a Tax upon the French? Does not every body know, that the whole of it is paid by the Consumers here? It is so far from being a Tax upon the French, that they have considerably raised the Price of their Wines since the high Duties were laid on them here. As to the Matter of Form, Sir, I do not pretend to be a great Master of it; but since I have had the Honour to sit in Parliament I remember, that several Petitions have been received against Duties to be laid on: However, granting that it were a constant
and

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

and perpetual Rule not to receive Petitions against such Duties, yet certainly that Rule could relate only to those Duties, which were to be laid on for raising Money for the Current Service of the Publick, it could not be presumed to relate to those Duties, which were to be laid on for the Regulation of Trade only; and this last is the Case now before us. The Duties to be laid on by this Bill are so far from being Duties for the Supply of the Government, that I do not believe that even those Gentlemen, who appear so fond of the Duties to be laid on by it, so much as expect or wish that any Money shall be thereby raised for the Use of the Publick; the Bill is not intended for any such End; it is rather in the Nature of a Prohibition, and it was never pretended that no Petitions were ever to be received against a Bill for prohibiting any Sort of Commerce.

‘ It may be the Case, that this House has sometimes refused to receive Petitions from some Parts of Britain against Duties to be laid on; but this can be no Reason why the Petition, I have now in my Hand, should be rejected: The People in every Part of Great Britain have a Representative in this House, who is to take Care of their Particular Interest, as well as of the General Interest of the Nation; and they may, by means of their Representatives in this House, offer what Reasons they think proper against any Duties to be laid on; but the People, who are the Petitioners in the Petition I have now in my Hand, have no particular Representatives in this House; and therefore they have no other Way of applying or of offering their Reasons to this House, but in the way of being heard at the Bar of the House by their Agent here in England; therefore if that general Rule of not receiving Petitions against Duties to be laid on, be ever to be receded from, the Case now before us ought to be an Exception to the general Rule.’

Mr Conduitt.

To this Mr Conduitt replied,
Sir,

‘ I apprehend it has always been the Custom of this House, I am sure it has been the Custom ever since the Revolution, to refuse receiving Petitions against any Duties to be laid on, and that without any Distinction whether the Duties to be laid on were for the Raising of Money, or for the Regulation of Trade: As our Colonies are all a Part of the People of Great Britain, they are generally represented in this House as well as the rest of the People are; and in all the Resolutions of this House, a due Regard will certainly be had to the particular Interest of every one of them, so far as it is consistent with the general Interest of the Whole, for which Reason I can see no Occasion for making an Exception as to them; and therefore I cannot but be of the

same

same Opinion with those Gentlemen, who are for refusing their Consent to the bringing up of this Bill. As for the Duties on Wine, mentioned by the honourable Gentleman who spoke last, though they are paid by the Consumers here, yet they may be looked on as a Tax upon the French, for if it were not for those Duties, a much greater Quantity of their Wines would be consumed here than there is at present, and consequently they would thereby draw a much larger Sum of Money out of this Nation than they now do ; and as to the Advance of the original Price of their Wines, there are a great many other Causes it may be owing to, but it never can be owing to the Diminution of the Quantity consumed.'

Anno 5. Geo. II.
1732-33.

Mr Pulteney spoke next :

Mr Pulteney.

Sir,

' I do not pretend to be a Master of Form, but I believe there may be many Precedents found, for justifying the House in receiving the Petition now offered to us. I very well know, Sir, how great a Master you are of the Forms and Methods of Proceeding in this House, and therefore I shall always be as ready as any Gentleman in the House, to submit to your Opinion when any such Question arises ; but I cannot think, Sir, that any of your Friends would desire you to give your Opinion thus upon a Surprise, in a Matter which seems to be so much contested ; nor do I believe that you would be ready to comply with any such unreasonable Desire ; if you should once give your Opinion in any such Dispute, I should be afraid afterwards to inspect the Journals of the House, lest they should be found to contradict the Opinion you had given : But if we are to search for Precedents, I am sure that as to the present Case, there will be no Occasion for going any farther back than the Revolution. Before that Time I believe we can find few or no Precedents any way relating to the Question now in Hand, because Parliaments were not then so frequent, and Taxes very rare. Let any Gentleman but look into the Statute-Books lying upon our Table, he will there see to what a vast Bulk, to what a Number of Volumes, our Statutes relating to Taxes have swelled since the Revolution ; and how thin, how few the Volumes are, that contain all the Statutes relating to Taxes that ever were made before that Time : It is monstrous, it is even frightful to look into the Indexes, where for several Columns together we see nothing but Taxes, Taxes, Taxes ! It is true, Sir, when Gentlemen reflect on the many Blessings we thereby enjoy, when they consider the many Advantages we reaped by the Revolution, they will think that we could not pay too dear for so happy a Turn in our Affairs.

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

‘ As to the Question now before us, I cannot see why it should be so much debated, I cannot see why the Receiving of this Petition should be so much opposed, unless it be that the Rejecting of this Petition, is to be made use of as a Precedent for receiving no Petitions against a certain Scheme, which we expect soon to be laid before us: This, I am afraid, is really the Case; for then Gentlemen, who are not much Masters of Form, Gentlemen who are but little conversant in the Journals of the House, may quote a Precedent of but a few Days standing, for not receiving any Petitions that may be offered against that Scheme; I do not indeed know whether there will be any such Petitions, but if I may judge by the Spirit which has already appeared in the Nation, I can make no Doubt but that Petitions will be sent up from all Parts of the Country against that Scheme.’

Sir Thomas Aston.

Then Sir Thomas Aston said,

Sir,

‘ As to the Point of Form which is now the Subject of Debate, I cannot venture to give my Opinion thereon, but I am surprized that the honourable Gentleman should have any Apprehensions of our refusing to receive any Petitions, that may be offered against the Scheme he hinted at: For whatever Objection there may be against the House receiving any Petitions, that are offered against Duties to be laid on, there cannot surely be any Objection against our receiving Petitions, that may be offered against a new and a dangerous Method of collecting Duties already laid on.’

Hereupon Mr Sandys stood up again, and said,

‘ Sir,

‘ Since Gentlemen seem so much to differ as to the Point of Form, I shall move, That a Committee may be appointed to search Precedents, in relation to the receiving or not receiving Petitions against the imposing of Duties; for as some Gentlemen have affirmed it to have been the constant Usage of this House ever since the Revolution, to reject all such Petitions, I must take the Liberty to affirm the Fact to have been otherwise; and it is so far otherwise, that if my Motion be agreed to, I believe more Precedents will be found for receiving, than for rejecting of such Petitions.’

This Motion was seconded by Mr Heathcote, and thereupon Sir John Barnard desired to withdraw the Motion he had made: But that being opposed, and some Debate arising as to that Point, Mr Speaker acquainted the House of its being their constant Rule, that when any Motion is once made and seconded, the Question, if insisted on, must be put upon that Motion; it could not be withdrawn without the Leave of the House: Hereupon the previous Question was moved for, and carried in the Affirmative by 140 to 112. Then the Que-

tion

Mr Sandys moves for appointing a Committee to search Precedents relating to Petitions against Bills for imposing Duties;

Which is seconded by Mr Heathcote.

Hereupon Sir J. Barnard desires to withdraw his former Motion, which passes in the Negative; as does also Mr Sandys's Motion.

tion was put for bringing up the Petition, which passed in the Negative : After this the Question being also put for searching of Precedents, it passed in the Negative.

March 9. The House went into a Committee, to consider of the most proper Methods for encouraging the Manufacture and Export of Home-made Spirits ; and Mr Horatio Walpole open'd the Debate with the following Speech :

Sir,

‘ As we are now in a Committee for encouraging Home-made Spirits, it may not be improper for us to take into our Consideration the Duties payable on French Brandies and other Foreign Spirits : As the Laws now stand, the Duties payable upon French Brandies amount in the whole to about 6s. and 5 d. *per* Gallon, which has always been looked on rather as a Prohibition, than as a Duty to be fairly and honestly paid either by the Importer or Consumer ; and indeed it has in Fact been always found to be so, for few or none have ever paid that Duty ; those Brandies have always been smuggled and stole in upon us, notwithstanding all the Methods we could ever take to prevent it ; or they have made use of an Artifice to evade the Laws, which is this : As the Laws stand at present, the Duties payable upon Flemish Brandies amount in the whole but to 4s. *per* Gallon, and as it is not possible to distinguish Flemish Brandies from French Brandies, therefore great Quantities of French Brandies were carried first to Rotterdam, and from thence imported upon us as Flemish Brandies ; after that they were carried to Ostend, and from thence imported as Flemish ; and now for some Years past, they have been carried to Dunkirk, and from thence brought to the several Ports of Britain, and entered as Flemish Brandies.

‘ As this Practice is, Sir, an Evasion of the Laws in Being, it ought certainly to be remedied, and the Manner how, will be the proper Question now to be considered ; If the Duties now payable upon French Brandies should be laid on all Foreign Spirits, it would not only encourage the Smuggling and Running Trade, but it would be a Prejudice to our own Distilling-Trade, for our Distillers are under a Necessity of mixing up a certain Proportion of French Brandy with our English Spirits, in order to make them fit for Use either at Home or Abroad ; and therefore if such a Duty can be thought of to be laid upon all Foreign Spirits, as will prevent their being sold in this Country so cheap, as to interfere with the Consumption of our Home-made Spirits, and yet not disable us from importing honestly and fairly as much as our Distillers may have Occasion for in the Manufacture of our Home-made Spirits, I hope Gentlemen will readily come in to such a Proposition.

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

Mr H. Walpole moves for laying a Duty of 5s. *per* Gallon on all Foreign Brandies, for encouraging the Manufacture and Export of Home-made Spirits.

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

‘ In order, Sir, to make such a Proposition to this House, I have for some time considered the Case, I have talked with some of the most noted Distillers in Town about it, and I have made all the Inquiries I thought proper, for obtaining a full Information as to this Particular; and from the whole, I believe that a Duty of 5 s. *per* Gallon upon all Foreign Brandies, is the most proper Medium to be fixed on.’

Debate thereon.

This Motion met with very little Opposition, only some Members declar’d, ‘ That they thought a Duty of 5 s. 6 d. would be more effectual for the Purpose intended :’ Then Mr Sandys stood up, and spoke as follows :

Mr Sandys.

Sir,

‘ I am glad to hear from the honourable Gentleman over the way, that all Mixtures are not to be looked on as publick Frauds, for it seems the mixing of French Brandy with English Spirits is not only no publick Fraud, but a Mixture which ought to be encouraged, as being useful and necessary in the Distilling-Trade; yet with respect to the Publick, I cannot conceive how the mixing of English Cyder with Portugal Wine, can be considered as a greater Fraud than the mixing of French Brandy with English Spirits.

‘ I must likewise take Notice, that the same Gentleman seems to admit, that the Laws of the Customs and Excise, when united and joined together, are found to be ineffectual for collecting the Duties payable upon the Commodities he mentioned, or for the preventing the Smuggling and Running of them into this Kingdom; and therefore I hope, Sir, I shall not hereafter hear any Proposition, either from that Gentleman or any of his Friends, for laying any other Duties under the same Circumstances, more especially since the Uniting the Laws of the Customs and Excise is well known to be, in all Cases, an Union, which is most grievous and most burthenfome to the Subject.’

Sir W. Wyndham's
Observations on
Dunkirk's being
mention'd as a
Port.

In the Course of this Debate, Dunkirk having been mention'd as a Port, Sir William Wyndham said, ‘ That he was surpriz'd to hear it so much as mentioned as a Port : That it was against the Honour of the English Nation to acknowledge it as such, or to admit that it should ever be made Use of as such : That it was not now the proper Subject of their Consideration, but he hop'd that the House would at some other time take an Opportunity to resolve itself into a Committee to consider of an Affair of so great Importance.’ To this Sir Robert Walpole replied, ‘ That he hop'd Gentlemen would not be diverted from what was then the proper Subject of their Consideration : That Dunkirk's being mentioned as a Port, must necessarily raise the just Indignation of every Englishman : That no Englishman ever did, or

Sir R. Walpole.

ever

ever could admit it as a Port : But that whatever Terms Gentlemen might inadvertently make use of, yet he hop'd no Pretence would ever be from thence taken to infringe those Rights, which this Nation is by a most solemn Treaty justly intitled to.'

Then the Committee resolv'd, That the Act passed in the second Year of King George II. intitled, An Act, *For laying a Duty upon Compound Waters or Spirits, and for licensing the Retailers thereof*, had been a Discouragement to the Distilling of Spirits from Corn in Great Britain, and therefore ought to be repealed : That for the Encouragement of the Exportation of Spirits drawn from Corn in Great Britain, a Drawback, or Allowance of 6l. 8s. *per* Ton, ought to be paid and allowed on the Exportation thereof : And that the Duties payable upon Brandy and Spirits imported, except from his Majesty's Plantations in America, should from the 24th of June next, cease and determine, and that in Lieu thereof there should be granted to his Majesty a Duty of five Shillings *per* Gallon, on all Brandy and Spirits imported from Foreign Parts, except such as shall be of the Growth and Manufacture of his Majesty's Plantations in America.

March 12. The above Resolutions were agreed to by the House, and a Bill order'd accordingly, which afterwards, with some Amendments, pass'd into a Law.

March 14. The House resolv'd itself into a Committee of the whole House, to consider of the most proper Methods for the better Security and Improvement of the Duties and Revenues, already charged upon, and payable from, Tobacco and Wines : The many Accounts, Returns, and other Papers, which the House had before called for, being first referred to the said Committee ; and the Commissioners of the Customs and of the Excise attending, pursuant to an Order of the preceding Day ; Sir Robert Walpole open'd the Debate with the following Speech :

Sir,

'As I had the Honour to move for the House to resolve itself into this Committee, I think it incumbent upon me to open to you what was then intended to be propos'd, as the Subject of your Consideration. We are now in a Committee for considering of the most proper Methods, for the better Security and Improvement of the Duties and Revenues already charged upon, and payable from Tobacco and Wines : This can be done in no Way so proper or effectual, as that of preventing for the future those Frauds, by which the publick Revenues have been so much injured in Times past. I know, that whoever attempts to remedy Frauds, attempts a Thing that must be very disagreeable to all those, who have been guilty

Anno 6. Geo. II.

1732-33.

Mr H. Walpole's Motion agreed to ; And a Bill order'd, to encourage the Trade of Home-made Spirits ;

Which passes into a Law.

The Commons, in a Grand Committee, consider of proper Methods for securing and improving the Duties on Wine and Tobacco.

Sir Robert Walpole proposes the Excise Scheme for that Purpose, which occasions a great Debate.

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

guilty of them, or who expect a Benefit by such in Time to come. This, Sir, I am fully sensible of, and from this have sprung all those Clamours, which have been raised without Doors, against what I am now to propose to you. The Smugglers, the fraudulent Dealers, and those who have for many Years been enriching themselves by cheating their Country, foresaw, that if the Scheme I am now to propose took Effect, their profitable Trade would be at an End; this gave them the Alarm, and from them I am persuaded it is, that all those Clamours have originally proceeded.

‘ In this ’tis certain, that they have been most strenuously assisted and supported by another Set of People, who, from Motives much worse, and of much more dangerous Consequence to their Country, are fond of improving every Opportunity that offers, for stirring up the People of Great Britain to Mutiny and Sedition. But, Sir, notwithstanding all the Clamours that such wicked and deceitful Men have been able to raise, as the Scheme I have to propose will be a great Improvement to the publick Revenue, an Improvement of 2 or 300,000 l. *per Annum* and perhaps more, and as it will likewise be of great Advantage to the fair Trader, I thought it my Duty, not only as being in the Station I am in, but also as being a Member of this House, to lay it before you; for no such Clamours shall ever deter me from doing what I think is my Duty, or from proposing any Thing that I am convinced will be of such signal Benefit to the Revenue, and to the Trade of my Country.

‘ It has been most industriously spread abroad, that the Scheme I am now to propose, was a Scheme for a General Excise; but I do aver that no such Scheme ever enter’d into my Head, nor, for what I know, into the Head of any Man I am acquainted with: My Thoughts were always confined solely to those two Branches of the Revenue, arising from the Duties on Wine and Tobacco; and it was the frequent and repeated Advices I had of the notorious Frauds committed in those two Branches of the Revenue, and the Clamours even of some of the Merchants themselves, that made me turn my Thoughts particularly towards considering those two Branches, in order to find out, if possible, some Remedy for the growing Evil; what I am now going to propose will, I believe, if agreed to, be an effectual Remedy; but if I now fail in what I am to propose, it will be the last Attempt of this Kind that I shall ever make; I believe it will be the last that will ever be made, either by me, or by any that shall succeed me in the Station I am now in.

‘ At present, I shall lay before you only the Case as it now stands with respect to the Tobacco-Trade, and the Revenue arising therefrom; and here it will be necessary first
to

to consider the Condition of our Planters of Tobacco in America ; if we can believe them, if we can give any Credit to what they themselves say, we must conclude that they are reduced almost to the last Extremity ; they are reduced even almost to a State of Despair, by the many Frauds that have been committed in that Trade, by the heavy Duties which the Importers of Tobacco are obliged to pay upon Importation, and by the ill Usage they have met with from their Factors and Correspondents here in England, who, from being their Servants, are now become their Lords and Masters. These poor People have sent home many Representations of the bad State of their Affairs, and have lately sent over a Gentleman with a Remonstrance, setting forth their Grievances, and praying for some speedy Relief : This they may obtain by Means of the Scheme I intend now to propose, and I believe it is from this Scheme only that they can expect any Relief.

‘ The next Thing we are to consider, is the State of the Tobacco-Trade, with regard to the fair Trader ; the Man who deals honourably and fairly with the Publick, as well as with private Men ; the Man who honestly pays all those Duties which the Publick is justly intitled to, finds himself prevented and forestalled, almost in every Market within the Island, by the Smuggler and the fraudulent Dealer ; And even as to our foreign Trade in Tobacco, those who have no Regard to Honour, to Religion, or to the Welfare of their Country, but are every Day contriving Ways and Means for cheating the Publick by Perjuries and false Entries, are the greatest Gainers ; and it will always be so, unless we can fall upon some Way of putting it out of their Power to carry on any such Frauds for the future.

‘ And lastly, we ought to consider the great Loss sustained by the Publick, by Means of the Frauds committed in the Tobacco-Trade, and the Addition that must certainly be made to the publick Revenue, if those Frauds can be prevented in Time to come : By this Addition we may be enabled to relieve the Nation from some of those Taxes, which it has laboured under so many Years ; whereas, as the Case now stands, the innocent and the honest Part of the Nation are charged with Taxes, which they would be free from, if the fraudulent Dealers and the Smugglers could be any Way obliged to pay that, which is justly due by them to the Publick. This will, I am convinced, be the Effect of the Scheme I am to propose to you, and whoever therefore views it in its proper Light, must see the Planters, the fair Traders, and the Publick, ranged on one Side in Favour of it ; and none but the unfair Traders and the Tobacco-Factors on the other.

‘ I shall

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‘ I shall beg Leave to mention to you some of those Frauds which have come to my Knowledge. The Evidence I have had of them is to me very convincing: But in such Cases Gentlemen ought always to consider what Evidence it is impossible to bring, what Evidence it is by the Nature of the Thing unreasonable to expect.’

Then Sir Robert Walpole gave an Account of the several Frauds which had been practised of late Years in the Tobacco-Trade, from which he made Calculations of the Loss the Publick thereby sustained, particularly that of getting the Tobacco weighed at an Under-Weight upon Importation, and getting it weighed again upon Exportation at a Weight much above what it ought to be. Then he proceeded thus :

‘ Sir, A particular Instance of this Fraud I came lately to the Knowledge of by meer Accident: One Midford, who had been a considerable Tobacco-Merchant in the City, happened to fail, at a Time when he ow’d a large Sum of Money upon Bond to the Crown; whereupon an Extent was issued out immediately against him, and thereby the Government got Possession of all his Books, by which the Fraud he had been guilty of was discovered; for it appeared as may be seen by one of his Books I have in my Hand, [*Here he shew’d one of Midford’s Books to the Committee*] that upon the Column where the false Quantities, which had been enter’d at the Importation, by Collusion between him and the Officer, by which he paid or bonded the Duty payable upon Importation, a Slip of Paper had been so artfully pasted on that it could not be discover’d, and upon this Slip of Paper were written the real Quantities which were enter’d, because he was obliged to produce the same Book when that Tobacco was enter’d for Exportation; but then upon Exportation, the Tobacco was enter’d and weigh’d according to the Quantities mark’d upon this Slip of Paper so artfully pasted on as I have mention’d, by which he got a Drawback, or his Bonds returned, to near double the Value of what he had actually paid Duty for upon Importation. Yet this Midford was as honest a Man and as fair a Trader as any in the City of London; I desire not to be misunderstood, I mean that before he fail’d, before these Frauds came to be discover’d, he was always reckon’d as honest a Man, and as fair a Trader as any in the City of London, or in any other Part of the Nation.’

‘ After this, he mention’d the several Frauds following, viz. That of Re-landing the Tobacco after it was shipp’d off for Exportation: That of Socking of Tobacco, which was a Cant-Word us’d for stealing and smuggling it out of the Ships after their Arrival in the River, before they were unloaded

unloaded at the Custom-house : That of stripping the Stalks, and afterwards splitting and pressing them by an Engine contrived for that Purpose, and then exporting them : That of giving Bonds for the Duty payable upon Importation, whereby the Government had lost several large Sums by the Failure of Payment of such Bonds : That of the rich money'd Men making prompt Payments, by which the Publick was obliged to allow them *Ten per Cent.* Discount as to the Duties, and by entering the Tobacco soon after for Exportation, they drew back the whole Duties ; so that the Government actually lost *Ten per Cent.* upon all the Tobacco that had been so enter'd. Then he went on as follows :

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‘ Sir, These Frauds are notorious, most of them are known to the whole World ; and as the Laws of the Customs have been found ineffectual for the preventing of such Frauds, therefore it is propos’d to add the Laws of Excise to the Laws of the Customs, and by Means of both it is probable, I may say certain, that all such Frauds will be prevented in Time to come.

‘ By the several Subsidies and Imposts now payable upon Tobacco, by several Acts of Parliament made for that Purpose [*Here he gave an Account of the several Acts of Parliament for laying Duties on Tobacco*] it appears, that the Duties now payable upon Tobacco on Importation amount to 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. *per Pound Weight*, all which must be paid down in ready Money, by the Merchant, upon Importation thereof, with the Allowance of *Ten per Cent.* upon prompt Payment ; or otherwise there must be Bonds given with sufficient Sureties for Payment of the Money, which is often a great Loss to the Publick, and is always a great Inconvenience to the Merchant Importer ; whereas, by what I am to propose, the whole Duties to be paid for the future will amount to no more than 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. *per Pound Weight*, and this Duty not to be paid till the Tobacco comes to be sold for Home-Consumption ; so that if the Merchant exports his Tobacco, he will be quite free from all Payment of Duty, or giving Bond therefore, or finding out proper Sureties for joining in such Bond ; he will have nothing to do but to re-load his Tobacco on board a Ship for Exportation, without being at the Trouble to attend for having his Bonds cancell’d, or for taking out Debentures for the Drawbacks ; all which, I conceive, must be a great Ease to the fair Trader ; and to every such Trader the preventing of Frauds must be a great Advantage, because it will put all the Tobacco-Traders in Britain upon the same Footing, which is but just and equal, and what ought certainly to be accomplished, if it be possible.

‘ Now, in order to make this Ease effectual to the fair
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Trader, and to contribute to his Advantage by preventing as much as possible any Frauds in Time to come, I propose, as I have said, to join the Laws of Excise to those of the Customs, and to leave the one Penny, or rather three Farthings *per* Pound, call'd the farther Subsidy, to be still charged at the Custom-House upon the Importation of any Tobacco, which three Farthings shall be payable to his Majesty's Civil List as heretofore : And I propose that all Tobacco for the future, after being weighed at the Custom-House, and charged with the said three Farthings *per* Pound, shall be lodg'd in a Warehouse or Warehouses, to be appointed by the Commissioners of the Excise for that Purpose, of which Warehouse the Merchant Importer shall have one Lock and Key, and the Warehouse-keeper to be appointed by the said Commissioners shall have another ; in order that the Tobacco may lie safe in that Warehouse till the Merchant finds a Market for it, either for Exportation or for Home-Consumption : Thus if his Market be for Exportation, he may apply to his Warehouse-keeper, and take out as much for that Purpose as he has Occasion for, which, when weighed at the Custom-House, shall be discharg'd of the three Farthings *per* Pound with which it was charged upon Importation, so that the Merchant may then export it without any farther Trouble : But if his Market be for Home-Consumption, that he shall then pay the three Farthings charged upon it at the Custom-House upon Importation, and that then upon calling his Warehouse-keeper, he may deliver it to the Buyer, on paying an Inland-Duty of 4 d. *per* Pound Weight, to the proper Officer appointed to receive the same.

‘ And whereas all the Penalties and Forfeitures to become due, by the Laws now in Being, for regulating the collecting of the Duties on Tobacco, or at least all that Part of them which is not given to the Informers, now belong to the Crown ; I propose that all such Penalties and Forfeitures, so far as they formerly belonged to the Crown, shall for the future belong to the Publick, and be applicable to the same Uses to which the said Duties shall be made applicable by Parliament ; and for that Purpose I have his Majesty's Commands to acquaint this House that he, out of his great Regard for the publick Good, with Pleasure consents that they shall be so apply'd, which is a Condescension in his Majesty, that I hope every Gentleman in this House is fully sensible of, and will freely acknowledge.

‘ I know there has been an Objection made, I expect to hear it again made in this House, against what I now propose : The Objection is this, ‘ That a great many of his Majesty's Subjects will be liable to be tried in a Multitude of Cases by the Commissioners of Excise, from whom
there

‘ there is no Appeal, but to Commissioners of Appeal, or to Justices of Peace in the Country, all named by the King and removeable at Pleasure, from whom the Appellants cannot expect to meet with Justice or Redress.’ I am far from thinking there is any Ground for this Complaint, I am far from thinking that any Man ever had a just Reason to say that he was wronged, or unjustly dealt with, either by the Commissioners of Appeal, or by the Justices of the Peace at their Quarter-Sessions; but in order to obviate any Objection of this Nature, I propose that all Appeals in this Case, as well as in all other Cases relating to the Excise, shall for the future be heard and determin’d by two or three of the Judges to be named by his Majesty, out of the twelve Judges belonging to Westminster-Hall; and that in the Country, all Appeals, from the first Sentence of his Majesty’s Justices of the Peace, shall be to the Judge of Assize upon the next Circuit which shall come into that Country, who shall in all Cases proceed to hear and determine such Appeals in the most summary Way, without the Formality of Proceedings in Courts of Law or Equity. From such Judges, and from such a Manner of Proceeding, every Man must expect to meet with the utmost Dispatch, and with the most impartial Justice; and therefore I must think, that what I now propose can be no Inconvenience to those, who may thereby be subjected to the Laws of Excise; but that if there was formerly any Ground of Complaint, it may be a great Relief to those who are already subjected to such Laws.

‘ This is the Scheme which has been represented in such a dreadful and terrible Light: This is the Monster, that many-headed Monster, which was to devour the People, and to commit such Ravages over the whole Nation. How justly it has been represented in such a Light, I shall leave to this Committee, and to the whole World without Doors to judge. I have said, I will say it again, that whatever Apprehensions and Terrors People may have been brought under, from a false and malicious Representation of what they neither did nor could possibly know or understand, I am firmly persuaded, when they do come to know and fully to understand the Scheme which I have now had the Honour to open to you, they will view it in another Light; and that if it has the good Fortune to be approved of by Parliament, and comes to take Effect, the People will soon feel the happy Consequences thereof; and when they feel those good Effects, they will no longer think those People their Friends, who have so grossly imposed on their Understandings.

‘ I look upon it as a most innocent Scheme; I am convinced it can be hurtful to none but Smugglers and unfair Traders; I am certain it will be of great Benefit and Advantage

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vantage to the publick Revenue; and if I had thought otherwise of it, I never would have ventured to have proposed it in this Place; therefore I shall now beg Leave to move that it may be resolved, That it is the Opinion of this Committee, that the Subsidy and additional Duty upon Tobacco of the British Plantations, granted by an Act of the 12th of King Charles II. and the Impost thereon, granted by an Act of the first of King James II. and also the one third Subsidy thereon, granted by an Act of the 2d of Queen Anne, amounting in the whole to 5 ¹/₂d. *per* Pound, for several Terms of Years in the said respective Acts mention'd, and which have since been continued and made perpetual, subject to Redemption by Parliament, shall from and after the 24th Day of June 1733, cease and determine.'

Sir Robert Walpole having thus opened and explained the Nature of the Excise-Scheme, Mr Perry answered him as follows :

Sir,

Mr Perry.

'The honourable Gentleman on the Floor has taken up a great deal of the Time of the Committee, in stating a great Number and Variety of Facts, and in drawing Conclusions and making Calculations, upon the Supposition that every one of those Facts was exactly as he has been pleased to represent them to us. This I cannot entirely agree with the Gentleman in, for if all those Facts were exactly as he has represented them, and if all the Computations he has made upon that Supposition were just, that Quantity of Tobacco, the Duties of which the Publick is thereby supposed to be entirely defrauded of, would amount to a much greater Quantity of Tobacco yearly, than grows in the whole Country from which we fetch that Commodity. I did not expect to have heard so long a Detail of Facts, or so many particular Computations: I do not think it at all necessary upon the present Occasion; I expected that the Gentleman would have taken a much more general and a more just Method: I thought he would have stated to us the Quantity of Tobacco yearly imported, the Quantity yearly exported, and would have given us the best Proofs that could be found for justifying his Computations in that Respect, because from thence every Man might have easily seen what Quantity remained for Home-Consumption, and what Sum of Money this would have yearly brought in, if the Duties had been all regularly paid; and upon comparing that with what those Duties have really amounted to for some Years past, we might have been able to have made some Guess at the Value of the Frauds that have been committed, and at the Advantage that may accrue to the Publick, supposing that all Frauds had been prevented for the Time to come.

This

‘ This is the proper Way, the only Way of coming at any Sort of certain Knowledge in the Affair before us, but I am afraid if we should consider it in this Way, we should find that the Scheme now proposed to us would be of no such mighty Advantage to the publick Revenue as has been represented, even supposing that all Frauds were for the future to be thereby entirely prevented: And considering that no Method of Collection, no Pains or Penalties, that can be contrived, can be supposed effectual for preventing every Fraud that may hereafter be invented and set on Foot; we should find no great Temptation for agreeing to any Scheme, by which the Liberties of our Country may be brought into the least Danger, for the sake of any Advantage that we could suppose would thence accrue to the publick Revenue. That there are Frauds committed in the Tobacco-Trade, I shall never pretend to deny, I make no manner of Doubt but that there are too many Frauds committed in that Trade, as well as in every other Branch of the publick Revenue: But upon a fair State of the Case, I am sure they cannot amount to near that Value, which the honourable Gentleman has been pleased to mention; and therefore I beg Leave to examine a little those particular Frauds and Calculations which have been mention’d by him.’

Here Mr Perry went thro’ and examin’d all the Frauds that had been mention’d, and all the Computations that had been made, more particularly as to the Bonds, then went on.

‘ Sir, It has been pretended, that the Publick has sustained, and are still in Danger of sustaining great Losses by the Method of granting Bonds for the Duties payable upon Tobacco: This I had before heard hinted at by the honourable Gentleman, and therefore I have lately had a Meeting with several of the Merchants in London trading in Tobacco: We have examined that Affair, and I can now tell that Gentleman, that I have it in Commission from them to propose, that if the Government will give us a Discount but of 20,000*l.* we will give undeniable Security for the Payment of all the Bonds they are now possessed of, which are not become desperate by the Bondsmen being already gone off, or become Bankrupts.

‘ As to that Fraud call’d Socking, it has been already discover’d, and is, I hope, prevented. But it is well known, that the Merchants discover’d it first, the Merchants went and complain’d of it to the Commissioners of the Customs, and the Merchants join’d and assisted the Officers of the Customs in putting an effectual Stop thereto. This I must know, because I had the Honour to go at the Head of several Merchants trading in Tobacco, to the Commissioners
of

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of the Customs, to request of them that we might be allow'd to give a Gratuity to one of their Officers, who had been most instrumental in the detecting and preventing of that Fraud, and accordingly I myself paid that Officer a very handsome Sum of Money, which we all thought his Diligence and Integrity very well deserv'd.

‘ As to the Frauds committed at the Weighing of the Tobacco either on Importation or Exportation, I am afraid they are too frequent: But as the Tobacco is always weighed upon the publick Custom-House Keys, where Custom-House Officers swarm like Bees before a Hive; and as there must be two or three Officers of the Customs attending and overlooking the Weighing of every Cask of Tobacco, we cannot suppose that these Frauds were ever so enormous as they are represented to be: Whatever Frauds are committed in that Way, must be either by Neglect or Collusion of the Officers, and I cannot see how the Scheme now proposed to us will make the Officers, either of the Customs or the Excise, more diligent in their Duty, or more faithful in their Trust, than they were heretofore. As to the Re-landing of Tobacco after it has been enter'd for Exportation, it was never pretended that this was practis'd at the Port of London, nor can it be pretended that any great Quantities of such Tobacco were ever consum'd in London: This is a Practice that may perhaps have been frequent in the Northern Parts of the Island, and in some distant Creeks and Corners of the Coast; and while there is such a vast Disproportion between the prime Cost and the Duties on Tobacco, I may prophecy, that in such remote Places this will always be a Practice: It could not be prevented by ten Times the Number of Officers we have, even tho' we had a much more numerous Army to support them than we have at present: And as for the stripping, cutting, and pressing the Stalks, and the Engine that has been invented for that Purpose, if the honourable Gentleman mention'd it as a Fraud, or as a late Discovery, he mistakes it very much; on the contrary, it is no Fraud, nor is it a late Discovery; it is a Business that has been openly, honestly, and publickly carry'd on for many Years; it is a Business that has improv'd our Tobacco-Trade, and is as common and as well known as the Business of a Woollen or a Linnen-Draper.

‘ Permit me now to take some Notice of the Tobacco-Planters, and of the Hardships they are laid under by their Tobacco-Factors, who are, it seems, now become their Lords and Masters. I am sure none of them ever thought of complaining, 'till they were put upon it by Letters and Applications from hence. There are Hardships in all Trades, which Men must necessarily submit to, or give up their Business;

Business; but every Man, that understands the Tobacco-Trade, must see that the Hardships the Factors labour under, are by much the most numerous and the most grievous; and if this Scheme should take Effect, they will become so grievous, that no Man would be able to continue in the Trade; by this the Planters would be utterly undone, and the Trade quite lost to this Nation; for it will be impossible for them to manage their Plantations, or to send their Produce to Britain, without having some considerable Merchants settled here, to send Ships to receive the same in America, to receive and dispose of it after it is landed here, and to supply them with ready Money 'till their Tobacco can be brought to a proper Market. As to the Remonstrance, mention'd by the honourable Gentleman to have been lately sent over by the Tobacco-Planters, I know it was obtain'd by Letters sent from hence, and I believe many of those who join'd in it, now heartily repent of what they have done; it was drawn up in Form of a Petition to this House, and was designed to have been presented, but it seems the Promoters of it have thought better of the Matter: However, that it was obtain'd in the unfair Manner I have represented, I am now ready to prove to the Conviction of the whole World.

' This then being the Case, as the Scheme now proposed to us cannot be supposed to be of any great Benefit to the publick Revenue, as it will be so far from being an Advantage to the fair Trader, or to the honest Planter, that it may probably ruin both, and entirely destroy our Tobacco-Trade; tho' I, and all honest Men, and I defy that honourable Gentleman, I defy the whole World to reproach me with one unfair Practice in the whole Course of my Life, I say, tho' I and all honest Men wish from our Hearts that Frauds may be prevented in this, as well as in every other Branch of the publick Revenue, yet I cannot give my Assent to a Proposition that may be of so dangerous Consequence; a Proposition which I look upon to be inconsistent with our Constitution; I am convinced it would prove a most fatal Stroke to the Liberties of my Country, which will, I doubt not, be made plainly appear by other Gentlemen of much greater Abilities than mine: And to every Man who has a Regard for his Country, or for the People he represents, this last must be a sufficient Reason for being against it, even tho' it were otherwise the most beneficial Scheme that had ever been proposed.

' But since I look upon my being a Member of this House, as the greatest Glory of my Life, since I look upon that Day on which I was chose one of the Representatives of the City of London, as the most auspicious Day of my whole Life, I cannot tamely sit still and hear the whole
Body

Anne 6. Geo. II.

1732-33.

Body of the Merchants of that great City represented by that honourable Gentleman as a Pack of Rogues, Smugglers, and unfair Traders. It is a Treatment they no way deserve, it is a very odd, a very unkind Sort of Treatment, and such a Treatment as I am sure they never will forget, and I believe never will forgive.'

Sir P. Methuen.

Sir Paul Methuen spoke next.

Sir,

' When I first heard of this Scheme, I was in the Country, and there I must say that it had been represented in such a Light, as created a general Dislike to it, and raised great Apprehensions in the Minds of most People. It was represented as a Scheme for introducing a General Excise; such a Scheme I own I would not allow myself to think was contrived or approved of by any Gentleman in the Administration; I did imagine, that all those in the Administration were very well convinced, that a General Excise was what the People of England would never quietly submit to, and therefore did not believe that any of them would ever countenance a Scheme which had the least Tendency that Way. But now, after having heard it open'd, and fully explain'd, by the honourable Gentleman on the Floor, I cannot but think that it is a wide Step towards establishing a General Excise, and therefore I must be excused assenting to it.

' How far it relates to Trade, with which it certainly has a very close Connection, I shall leave to be explain'd by others more conversant in those Affairs; nor will I take upon me to say how far it may be a Remedy for the Frauds mention'd by the honourable Gentleman; but there is another Concern which I shall always, while I have the Honour to sit in this House, have a particular Eye to, and that is, the Liberty of my Country. The Danger with which this Scheme seems to threaten the Liberty of many of my Fellow-Subjects, is alone of sufficient Force to make me give my Negative to the Question. Let Gentlemen but reflect, let them but cast their Eyes back on the several Laws that have been made since the Revolution, they will there find, that there has been already more Power vested in the Crown, than may be thought altogether consistent with the Constitution of a free Country; and therefore, I hope this House will never think of adding to that Power, which there may be some Ground to suspect is already too far extended.

' The Laws of Excise have always been look'd upon as most grievous to the Subject: All those already subjected to such Laws, are, in my Opinion, so far depriv'd of their Liberty; and since by this Scheme, a great many more of

his

his Majesty's faithful Subjects are to be subjected to those arbitrary Laws, let the Advantages accruing to the Publick from it be never so great or so many, they will be purchased at too dear a Rate, if they are purchased at the Expence of the Liberty of the meanest of his Majesty's Subjects; for even the meanest Man in the Nation has as natural and as good a Right to his Liberty, as the greatest Man in this or in any other Kingdom.

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1732-33.

' Let us but take a View of the neighbouring Nations in Europe, they were all once free; the People of every one of them had once as many Liberties and Privileges to boast of as we have now; but at present they are most of them reduced to a State of Slavery, they have no Liberty, no Property or Law, nor any Thing they can depend on. Let us examine their Histories, let us inquire into the Methods by which they are deprived of their Liberties, and we shall find a very near Resemblance between those Methods and the Scheme now proposed to us. Almost in every Country in the World, the Liberties of the People have been destroyed, under Pretence of preserving or of rescuing the People from some great Evil, to which it was pretended they were exposed: This is the very Case now before us, in order to enable the Crown to prevent some little Frauds, pretended to have been committed in the ancient Method of collecting the publick Revenue, it is proposed to us to put such a Power in the Hands of the Crown, as may enable some future Prince to enslave the whole Nation. This is really the Light in which this Scheme appears to me; but to the honourable Gentleman who proposed it to us, I am persuaded it appears in a quite different Light, otherwise I am certain he would never have proposed it to this Committee. However, since the Generality of the Nation have already shewn a great Dislike to it; I therefore hope the honourable Gentleman may be prevailed on to delay it 'till another Session of Parliament; in such a Delay there can be no Danger, there can be no great Loss to the Publick; more especially since the Money, to be thereby raised, is not so much as proposed to be applied to the current Service of the present Year: If it be delay'd till another Session of Parliament, Gentlemen will then have Time to consider it fully, and to consult with their Constituents about it; by that Time it may possibly appear in a quite different Light both to me and to many other Gentlemen, without Doors as well as within; and then, if upon Examination it appears to be as good a Thing as some Gentlemen now seem to believe, it will, without Doubt, be approved of by the Generality of those without, as well as by the Majority of those within.

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

‘ But I hope those Gentlemen, who have now so good an Opinion of the Scheme, will not think of thrusting it down People’s Throats, when they see that the Generality of the Nation have an Opinion of it quite different from what they have ; such a Resolution, such an Attempt might produce Consequences which I tremble to think of : and this is another Motive which is of great Weight with me ; I have the Honour to know his Majesty, his Royal Person I have formerly had the Honour to approach, and I know him to be a Prince of so much Goodness, that were this Scheme represented in this Light to him, he never would approve of it ; to him it will always be a sufficient Reason against any Proposition, that the Generality of his People have shewn their Dislike to it : I love his Majesty, I have a sincere and a dutiful Respect for him and all his Royal Family ; and therefore I shall always be afraid of any Thing that may alienate the Affections of many of his Majesty’s faithful Subjects, which I believe would be the certain Consequence of the present Establishment of this Scheme ; for which Reasons, if the Question be now pushed, I shall most heartily give my Negative to it.’

Sir P. Yorke,

Then Sir Philip Yorke * spoke as follows :

Sir,

‘ After the honourable Gentleman near me had open’d to the Committee, in a Manner so full and so clear, a Scheme which had met with so unfair and so ungenerous a Treatment, before those who treated it so could know any Thing about it, I little expected that the honourable Gentleman who spoke last, or any Gentleman in this Committee, could be so far deceiv’d, as to have taken it in the Light they do. In my Opinion, the Debate is now put upon a Footing very different from what it ought to be : What can the Affair now before us have to do with our Constitution ? There is nothing, there can be nothing supposed to be in the Proposition made by my honourable Friend, that can in the least tend towards incroaching on our Constitution, or towards affecting the Liberty of the Subject. The only Consideration at present before us is, Whether we shall allow those gross Frauds and Abuses, formerly committed in the Tobacco-Trade, to be still carry’d on with Impunity, or accept of a Remedy which, by effectually preventing these Frauds for the future, will considerably improve the publick Revenue, will be of great Advantage to the fair Trader, and of singular Use and Benefit to the whole Nation ?

‘ This

* Then Attorney General ; Appointed Lord Chief Justice of the King’s Bench, and created a Peer, the later End of the Year, 1735.

‘ This is the plain Question now before us, and if it be consider’d in its proper Light, without confounding it with other Matters with which it has no Manner of Relation, I am sure it cannot admit of any Debate. The honourable Gentleman, in opening this Affair to us, made it so manifest that there have been great Frauds committed in that Branch of Trade ; and that the preventing of those Frauds would be a great Improvement to the publick Revenue, that what he advanced on that Head has not been opposed or contradicted : And this House has been upon all Occasions so very careful of the publick Revenues, and has been always so ready to agree to any Measures for preventing Abuses in the collecting of them, that I cannot help thinking that the Dislike, which appears against the Remedy now proposed, must proceed from some other Motives than Gentlemen are willing to own.

‘ It is certain, that by the Frauds and Abuses that are committed in this Branch of the Revenue, not only the Publick is cheated of what is due to them, but likewise every private Consumer is most grossly imposed on, for he pays the same Price as if the Duties had actually been paid to the Publick : He pays a high Price for what he consumes, but then he has this for his Comfort, that he thinks a great Part of that high Price goes towards the publick Good of his Country ; but in all fraudulent Trade he is imposed on, the high Price he pays, goes every Farthing of it into the Pocket of the fraudulent Dealer. This then being plainly the Case, I should think that the Gentlemen, who oppose this Scheme, ought to shew us, that no such Frauds, as are pretended, have been committed ; or that they are so inconsiderable that they are not worth minding ; or that what is proposed would be no Sort of Remedy for them : But upon the present Question, to talk of our Constitution seems really to me to be a Sort of Insinuation, as if Frauds in the collecting of the publick Revenue were become a Part of our Constitution ; and that whoever attempts to remedy them, must attempt something against our Constitution : And as to the Liberty of the Subject, it is not possible for me to find out any Liberty that can be struck at by the Scheme now before us, but the Liberty of Smuggling ; for as to National Liberty, as to that Liberty which has always been, and I hope always will be the Glory of the People of these Kingdoms, it is certain that our publick Revenues are its greatest Security : How then can that Scheme be said to tend towards the destroying of Liberty, which so evidently tends towards the Improvement of that upon which our Liberty manifestly depends ?

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

‘ As to the raising Clamours and Disaffection among his Majesty’s faithful Subjects, there can be no Reason for apprehending any such Thing from the Scheme now proposed to us ; whatever Clamours may have been unjustly raised by ill-designing Men against the Scheme before it was known, will certainly all vanish as soon as it comes to be publicly known that there never was any Thing intended by the Scheme, but only to enable the Publick to receive those Duties they are already by Law intitled to ; and to prevent the fair Trader’s being undone by Rogues and Smugglers : So that one strong Argument with me for agreeing to the Scheme is, that by carrying it into Execution, and thereby shewing to every Man what it really is, those ill-grounded Clamours, which have been raised by the Enemies of the Government, may be allay’d ; and may be made appear to be at last as groundless as they were at first malicious. Besides, as one of the chief Things intended by this Scheme, is the Relief of the Landed Interest, it must contribute towards establishing his Majesty and his Government in the Hearts and Affections of all the Landed Gentlemen in England, when they see themselves so considerably relieved as to a Tax, which they have been charged with for a great many Years ; and that without loading them, or any of their Fellow-Subjects, with any new Tax whatever, or obliging one honest Man in the Kingdom to contribute a Farthing to the publick Charge more than he did before : This must secure to his Majesty the Affections of all honest Men, and it will greatly improve our Character among our Foreign Neighbours ; for when they see that the Government may be supported in Times of Peace, without the Assistance of that Imposition which is yearly raised upon the Landholders of Great-Britain, they will be careful of giving us any Disturbance or Offence ; they will all see that we have a Fund in Reserve, ready at all Times, and sufficient for supporting a most heavy and expensive War.

‘ As to the Severity of the Laws of Excise, I am surpriz’d to hear Gentlemen talk so much of it as they do. They talk of those Laws as if there were something in them most singularly severe, when it is well known that the Laws of the Customs are in many Cases as severe as those of the Excise, and the Powers granted by the former are, in most Cases, as extensive as those granted by the latter : An Officer of the Customs has, in many Cases, a Power of entering the House of any Subject in Britain ; this is a Power that is absolutely necessary to be given, and will always be necessary as long as we have any Duties to be levy’d ; it is a Power they have had for many Years, and yet it never has been, I hope it never will be abused ; if ever it should, the Parliament would,

would, without Doubt, severely chastise that Officer that committed such an Abuse, or those Commissioners who dared to encourage him in the committing of any such Abuse. In this therefore the Laws of the Excise are no more severe than the Laws of the Customs, and in most other Cases we shall find them pretty much the same with respect to Severity; for which Reason I could not but be surpris'd to hear the honourable Gentleman, who spoke last, say, 'That he 'thought all those who were subject to the Laws of Excise 'were downright Slaves, and were entirely deprived of their 'Liberty.' I believe that most of those People, who are subject to the Laws of Excise, look upon themselves to be as free, and enjoy as much Liberty, as any other of his Majesty's Subjects.

'One of the great Complaints against this Scheme is, I find, that it will greatly increase the Number of Excise-Officers; a new Army of Excisemen, it is said, must be rais'd for the Execution of this Scheme, and this may be of dangerous Consequence to our Liberties: But how little Weight there is in this Argument, I leave to every Gentleman to judge; the whole Number propos'd to be added is not above 126 Officers; and granting that there were to be 150, is this Nation to be enslaved by 150 little Excisemen? In this there is really something so ridiculous, that I am almost ashamed to mention it.

'Another Objection is, 'That thereby a great many People 'will be subjected to be try'd by the Commissioners of Excise, 'or by Commissioners of Appeal, who are entirely dependent 'on the Crown, and removeable at Pleasure:.' But this Objection is, I think, entirely removed, by making the Appeal to three Judges in Westminster-Hall, who are all Judges for Life, and are consequently entirely independent on the Crown. To this the Gentlemen answer, 'That, even before 'those Judges, the Subject is not to be try'd by a Jury,' and this is loudly complain'd of, as if the subjecting of Englishmen to any Trial but that by a Jury, were a great Innovation, and a dangerous Encroachment upon our Constitution. I own that by the Great Charter, by one of the Fundamental Articles of our Constitution, every Englishman is to be try'd by his Peers; but has not the Wisdom of the Nation found it necessary to admit of many Exceptions to this general Rule; we have several of our most eminent Courts, which are in every Method of their Proceeding an Exception to this Rule; in the Court of Chancery we have no Trials by Juries; in the High Court of Admiralty we have no Trials by Juries; and in many particular Cases it is order'd, that the Affair shall be try'd in the most summary Way without any Jury: In all these Cases the Wisdom of the Nation

found

found it necessary to depart from the general Rule established by the Great Charter, and therefore they altered the Method of Trial ; Why should not the Legislature now do the same ? Is not their Power the same ? And if they see good Reason for it in the present Case ought not they to do it ? Whatever is done by the Wisdom of Parliament becomes a Part of our Constitution ; and whatever new Method of Trial is thereby introduced, becomes from thenceforth as much a Part of our Constitution as ever the old one was.

‘ Now, if ever there was a Reason in any Case for altering the ancient Method of Trial by Jury, I am sure there is a very strong Reason for altering it with regard to Trials concerning the Revenue : Every Gentleman, who has been the least conversant in the Courts of Westminster-Hall, well knows the Partiality of Juries in Favour of those, who are sued by the Crown for any Frauds in the publick Revenue ; I could give many Instances of it, but I shall mention only one. [*Here he inform’d the House of the Case.*] The Defendant in this Case was one of the most famous and the most notorious Smugglers in the whole Country, he had often been try’d for such Practices, and though he had always before escaped, yet it was thought impossible he should then get off ; I had then the Honour to serve the Crown, and so must very well remember the Trial ; the Evidence against him was so very full and clear, that I believe there was not a Man in the Court, except those on the Jury, who were not fully convinced of the Truth of the Evidence given against him ; he was, according to the Opinion of every other Man present, fully convicted of what he was accused of ; yet the Gentlemen of the Jury thought fit to bring in a Verdict in his Favour : So that really the Crown can never pretend to prevent Smuggling or unfair Trading, as long as the Trials are to be for the most Part by Juries ; and where it becomes necessary to alter the Method of Trial, the altering it in that new Case can no more be said to be an Innovation or an Incroachment on our Constitution, than the altering of it formerly in another Case was.

‘ In short, I have as great a Value for the Liberty of my Fellow-Subjects as any Gentleman in this House ; I shall always be ready to appear for the Liberties of my Country, whenever I see them in any Manner attacked : But as Liberty does not at all enter into the present Question, it is needless to make any Declarations about it, or to have it any wise under our Consideration ; and therefore I shall be very ready to give my Assent to the Motion made by the honourable Gentleman near me.’

Sir Philip Yorke having done speaking, Sir Paul Methuen stood up again and spoke as follows :

Sir,

Sir,

‘ I rise up only to explain myself as to one Particular, in which the honourable and learned Gentleman over the Way, for whom I have a very great Respect, seems to have mistaken me, or rather has misrepresented what I said ; for I did not say, that those who are now subject to the Laws of Excise are downright Slaves, or that they are totally depriv’d of their Liberty : I should be sorry if any such Thing could be said of any Man, that has the least Pretence to call himself a Subject of Great Britain ; but I said that those, who are subjected to the Laws of Excise, are, so far as they are subjected to such Laws, depriv’d of their Liberty : They are deprived of a Part of their Liberty, and therefore cannot be said to be as free as any other of his Majesty’s Subjects. This is still my Opinion, and if those, who are so unfortunate as to be subject to the Laws of Excise, were to be asked the Question, Whether they think themselves as free in all Cases, as those who are subject to no such Laws ? I believe there is not one of them but would answer, No.’

Sir John Barnard spoke next :

Sir,

‘ I find that the honourable Gentleman who opened this Scheme to the Committee, [*Sir Robert Walpole.*] and the learned Gentleman who spoke since, [*Sir Philip Yorke*] make great Complaints of some People’s having grossly and maliciously misrepresented their Scheme, before those malicious Persons knew what it was. For my Part, I happen to be of a very different Way of thinking ; for tho’ I am far from thinking that the Scheme, as now open’d to us, is the very same with what it was when first formed ; yet, even as it is now opened, it is such a Scheme, in my Opinion, as cannot, even by Malice itself, be represented to be worse than it really is. Now that I know it ; now that I see what it is, it appears to me to be a Scheme that will be attended with all those bad Consequences, that ever were apprehended from it before it was known ; and I plainly foresee, that it will produce none of those good Effects, which Gentlemen have been pleased to entertain us with the Hopes of : They have, indeed, gilded the Pill a little, but the Composition within is still the same ; and if the People of England be obliged to swallow it, they will find it as bitter a Pill as ever was swallow’d by them since they were a People.

‘ The learned Gentleman was pleased to say that he was of Opinion, that the Opposition to this wicked Scheme, for so I must call it, proceeded from other Motives than Gentlemen are willing to own. I do not know what Motives he can mean. But I am persuaded, that those Gentlemen who propose

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Sir P. Methuen.

Sir J. Barnard.

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Sir J. Barnard
moves, That the
Commissioners of
the Customs might
be called in, which
being agreed to,
they are examin'd
as to the Amount
of the Frauds in
the Tobacco-
Trade.

propose this Scheme, have some secret Views, which it would neither be convenient or safe for them to own in this Place ; for as to any Reasons or Views, which may be openly avow'd for the proposing of this Scheme, I know of none, but that of preventing the Frauds that may be committed in that Branch of the Revenue now under our Consideration : And that it will not answer that Purpose, has been made plainly appear by my worthy Brother near me ; [Mr Perry] but granting that this Scheme should answer such a Purpose, if the Laws now in being, duly executed, are sufficient to answer that Purpose, what Necessity is there for applying this new, this desperate Remedy, a Remedy which is certainly much worse than the Disease ? But before I proceed any farther, I shall desire that the Commissioners of the Customs, who are attending at the Door, may be called in.'

The Commissioners were accordingly called in, and being asked by Sir John Barnard, What they thought the Value of the Frauds committed in the Tobacco-Trade might amount to one Year with another ? Their Answer was, That they had never made any Computation : But one of them said, That by a Computation he had made only to satisfy his own private Curiosity, he believed the Frauds come to their Knowledge, might amount to 30 or 40,000*l. per Annum*, one Year with another. Then Sir John Barnard ask'd them, Whether it was their Opinion, that if the Officers of the Customs performed their Duty diligently and faithfully, it would not effectually prevent all, or most of the Frauds that could be committed in the Tobacco-Trade ? To which they answer'd, That it was their Opinion it would. Then he ask'd them farther, Whether it was their Opinion, that if the Commissioners of the Customs had the same Power over their Officers, as the Commissioners of the Excise have over theirs, it would not contribute a great deal towards making them more faithful in the Discharge of their Duty than they now are ? To this their Answer was, That they believed it would. After this, the Commissioners being withdrawn, Sir John Barnard proceeded thus :

Sir,

' I now leave it to every Gentleman in this House to consider, what real Pretence can be form'd for introducing such a dangerous Scheme, as what has been propos'd to us : The only Pretence I have yet heard made use of is, the preventing of Frauds, by which, say they, the fair Trader will be encouraged, and the Revenue encreased : But now you see, that it is the Opinion, even of the Commissioners of the Customs, that, by a due Execution of the Laws now in
Being,

Being, all or most of those Frauds may be effectually prevented ; and I am sure, if they can be prevented by the Laws in Being, the preventing of them by that Method will contribute much more to the Increase of the publick Revenue, and to the Encouragement of the fair Trader, than the preventing of them by Means of the dangerous Scheme now proposed to us. I now leave it to the whole World to judge, who are they that have secret Motives which they are not willing to own ; which they dare not own ; Whether it be those who are the Proposers and Promoters of this Scheme, or those who are the Opposers of it ?

‘ The learned Gentleman seemed to be surpris’d how our Constitution, or the Liberties of our Country came to be brought in to the present Debate : He said, ‘ He thought they ‘ had no Manner of Concern in the present Question.’ I am sorry to differ from a Gentleman who, by his Profession, ought, who certainly does understand the Nature of our Constitution, as well as any Man in England ; but I am of Opinion, that the Constitution of our Government, and the Liberty of the Subject, was never more nearly or more immediately concerned in any Question, than they are in the present ; they are both so deeply concerned, that their Preservation or their total Overthrow depends entirely upon the Success of the Scheme now under Consideration : If the Scheme succeeds, they must tumble of course ; if the Scheme is defeated, they may be preserved : I hope they will be preserved ‘till Time shall be no more. But I must say, that the learned Gentleman, and every Gentleman who appears as an Advocate for the Scheme now proposed to us, is much in the Right to keep, if they can, the Constitution and the Liberties of their Country out of the Debate ; it is from thence that the principal Arguments are to be formed against their Scheme ; it is from thence that such Arguments may be form’d against it, as must appear unanswerable to every Man who has a Regard for either.

‘ The Gentleman tells us, ‘ That there are but 120, or ‘ 150 Excise-Officers, besides Warehouse-Keepers, to be added by the Scheme now before us ;’ and this additional Number they seem to make a Ridicule of ; but considering the Swarms of Tax-Gatherers we have already establish’d, this small Number, as they call it, is no trivial Matter ; and I would be glad to know from those Gentlemen, what they call Warehouse-Keepers, and what Number of them may be necessary ? I hope they will allow, that a Warehouse-Keeper appointed by the Treasury, and paid by the Treasury, is an Officer of the Revenue, as much as any other Officer whatsoever ; and if the Number that there must be of these be added to the other, I believe we may find that the Num-

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ber of Revenue-Officers to be added by this Scheme must be very considerable.

‘ As for the new Method of Appeal propos’d, I can see no Advantage that it will be of to any unfortunate Man that may have Occasion for it : In all Cases, the Charge and Trouble of attending must be very great, and the Event very precarious ; but in most Cases, where poor Retailers may have Occasion to be concerned, the Charge and Trouble of Attendance must be greater than the Subject can bear, so that all such People must succumb ; they must submit to the Determination of the Commissioners of the Excise, and can expect no other Redress, but what they meet with from the Mercy of those Commissioners. The Judges of Westminster-Hall are, ’tis true, for Life, but they are all named by the Crown ; I shall say nothing of the present Judges, who so worthily fill the several Benches of Westminster-Hall ; but if they should die, and if the Crown should be resolv’d to use that Power, which the Parliament had put into their Hands, in order to oppress the Subject, they will always find Judges fit for their Purpose : Judges are but Men, they are subject to the same Frailties that other Men are, and the Crown has always Plenty of Baits wherewithal to tempt them. A Judge may be made a Lord Chief Justice, a Lord Chief Justice may be made a Lord Chancellor, and every one may have a Son, a Brother, or a Cousin to be provided for ; and the Crown has many other Ways, by which they may win over a Judge to administer Justice according to the Directions he shall receive from Court ; more especially when he is to administer Justice in a summary Way, and without the usual Forms of Proceeding in Courts of Law and Equity. For by this new Method of Appeal, which has been so much bragg’d of, Care has been taken that the Subject shall not be restored to his ancient Birth-Right, that is, to a Trial by Jury : No, this I find is most carefully avoided, and yet I think it must be allow’d, that it is the inherent Right of every Englishman to be tried by his Peers ; I am not so much acquainted with Law, as to give an Account of the several Cases in which this Method of Trial has been set aside, or the Reasons for so doing ; but I will venture to say, that wherever that Method has been set aside, whether the same was done by the Wisdom of the Nation or otherwise, such an Alteration was an Innovation, and was a dangerous Encroachment upon the original Charter of our Constitution.

‘ As to the pretended Partiality of Juries, so much complained of by the learned Gentleman, it is of no Weight with me ; I cannot see how that honourable Gentleman, or any Gentleman, can pretend to know what Reasons a Jury may

may have for giving their Verdict: No Gentleman has a Right to be believ'd upon his single Say-so, against a Verdict given by twelve honest Men upon Oath. If there have been so many Verdicts given against the Crown, as that learned Gentleman seems to insinuate, it is to me a strong Proof that Prosecutions have been set on Foot against the Subject, upon the Evidence of Witnesses, whose Credibility or Veracity have not been very much to be depended on; which is so far from being an Argument for altering the Method of Trial by Jury. that it is a very strong Argument for the Continuance of that Method in all Time to come. But as it is now very late, and as I shall probably have another Opportunity of giving my Sentiments more fully upon the Affair now before us, I shall trouble you no farther at present, but only to declare, that now, after hearing this Scheme opened to us, I dislike it as much as ever I did any Representation of it that ever I heard of, and therefore shall give my Negative to the Question propos'd.'

Anno 6. Geo. II.

1732-33.

Then Sir Joseph Jekyll spoke as follows:

Sir J. Jekyll.

Sir,

'As the Affair, which is at present the Subject of our Consideration, has been much talk'd of, and variously represented without Doors; and as it has been for some Months the Subject of Conversation amongst People of all Ranks and Qualities, I was fully resolv'd to suspend my Judgment in relation to it, 'till I should hear it fully opened and laid before this House. There were, indeed, such Clamours rais'd without Doors, and it was represented in so many hideous Shapes, that I cannot say but I came this Morning to the House, if prejudiced, rather against, than in Favour of any such Project; but still I came, as I always do, altogether undetermined, and resolv'd so to remain, 'till I was fully inform'd by other Gentlemen, in the Course of the Debate, of all those Facts which ought to be known, before any Determination can be made in an Affair of so great Importance.

'I had before heard, that by this Scheme the Landed Gentlemen were to be eas'd of a Part of the Land-Tax; that the publick Revenue was to be greatly improved; and that our Planters in America, and our fair Traders at home were to be greatly encouraged: But all these Considerations would have had no Weight with me, if I had found that so many of my Fellow-Subjects were thereby to have been subjected to the grievous Laws of Excise, without any Alleviation or Alteration. I must own, that the Severity of the Laws of Excise has been long justly complain'd of, but at the same Time I must say, that the many Frauds committed in that Branch of the publick Revenue now under our Consideration

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are most heavy and grievous, and what I cannot think of seeing the Nation suffer any longer under, without applying some proper Remedy ; and since by the Proposition now made to us, there is not only an effectual Remedy provided against all those Frauds, but likewise a Method proposed, by which the Edge of the Laws of Excise is to be blunted, and that Severity taken quite off, which hitherto afforded just Ground of Complaint, therefore I cannot hesitate one Moment as to giving my Assent to what is now proposed.

‘ This Consideration is of the greater Weight with me, and must be so with every honest Man, that by what is now proposed, the Laws of Excise are to be rectify’d, not only in the Case now before us, but in every other Case ; the whole Body of those Laws are to be reform’d and rectify’d in such a Manner, as to remove the greatest Objection, with me indeed the only Objection that could ever be made against the Extension of them ; and if this Proposition be now rejected, it is not easy to know when we shall, or if we shall ever have such an Opportunity of reforming those Laws, which have been so long thought so grievous. With me it hath always been a Principle, to hearken to any reasonable Scheme for suppressing of those Frauds which are committed against the Publick ; I look upon the Persons guilty of such Frauds as the greatest Criminals, and if they have any Character, if they observe any Decency in private Life, I take it to be only because they have no Opportunity to do otherwise ; for that Man must have a very whimsical Conscience, who cheats the Publick, and yet would scruple to cheat a private Man if he had the same Opportunity.

‘ Whatever Resolutions we may come to in this Committee, there will probably be a Bill or Bills order’d to be brought in pursuant to them ; and if in the Course of the Debate, any real Difficulties be started, if any reasonable Objections be made, without Doubt all proper Care will be taken in the framing such Bill or Bills, to obviate all those Difficulties and Objections : This I make no Manner of Doubt of, and therefore I can find no Difficulty in giving my Assent to the Question proposed.’

Mr. Heathcote.

After Sir Joseph Jekyll, Mr Heathcote stood up and said :
Sir,

‘ Other Gentlemen have already fully explain’d and set forth the great Inconveniencies, which must be brought on the Trade of this Nation, by the Scheme now proposed to us ; those have been made very apparent, and from them arises a very strong Objection against what is now proposed : But the greatest Objection arises from the Danger to which this Scheme will most certainly expose the Liberties of our Country ; those Liberties, for which our Ancestors have so
often

often ventured their Lives and Fortunes ; those Liberties which have cost this Nation so much Blood and Treasure, seem already to be greatly retrenched : I am sorry to say it, but what is now in Dispute seems to me to be the last Branch of Liberty we have to contend for ; we have already establish'd a Standing Army, and have made it in a Manner a Part of our Constitution ; we have already subjected great Numbers of the People of this Nation to the arbitrary Laws of Excise, and this Scheme is so wide a Step towards subjecting all the rest of the People of England to those arbitrary Laws, that it will be impossible for us to recover or to prevent the fatal Consequences of such a Scheme.

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1732-33.

‘ We are told that his Majesty is a good and a wise Prince, we all believe him to be so ; but I hope no Man will pretend to draw any Argument from thence for our surrendering those Liberties and Privileges, which have been handed down to us by our Ancestors : We have, indeed, nothing to fear from his present Majesty ; he never will make a bad Use of that Power which we have put into his Hands ; but if we once grant to the Crown too great an Extent of Power, we cannot recall that Grant when we have a Mind ; and tho’ his Majesty should never make a bad Use of it, some of his Successors may : The being govern’d by a wise and a good King, does not make the People a free People ; the Romans were as great Slaves under the few good Emperors they had to reign over them, as they were under the most cruel of their Tyrants : After the People have once given up their Liberties, their Governors have all the same Power of oppressing them, tho’ they may not perhaps all make the same wicked Use of the Power lodg’d in their Hands ; but a Slave, that has the good Fortune to meet with a good natur’d and a humane Master, is no less a Slave than he that meets with a cruel and barbarous one. Our Liberties are too valuable, and have been purchased at too high a Price, to be sported with, or wantonly given up, even to the best of Kings : We have before now had some good, some wise and gracious Sovereigns to reign over us, but we find that under them our Ancestors were as jealous of their Liberties, as they were under the worst of our Kings : It is to be hoped that we have still the same Value for our Liberties ; if we have, we certainly will use all peaceable Methods to preserve and secure them ; and if such Methods should prove ineffectual, I hope there is no Englishman but has Spirit enough to use those Methods for the Preservation of our Liberties, which were used by our Ancestors for the Defence of theirs, and for transmitting them down to us in that glorious Condition in which we found them. There are some still alive, who bravely ventur’d their Lives and Fortunes in Defence of the
Liberties

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Liberties of their Country ; there are many whose Fathers were embark'd in the same glorious Cause. Let it never be said, that the Sons of such Men wantonly gave up those Liberties for which their Fathers had risked so much, and that for the poor Pretence of suppressing a few Frauds in the collecting of the publick Revenues, which might easily have been suppressed without entering into any such dangerous Measures. This is all I shall trouble you with at present, but so much I thought was incumbent upon me to say, in order that I might enter my Protest against the Question now before us.'

Mr Pulteney.

Mr Pulteney spoke next :

Sir,

' The honourable Gentleman, who open'd this Affair to us, took up so much of the Time of the Committee, and it is now so very late, that I am almost afraid of giving you any Trouble at present ; but I hope, considering the Importance of the Subject, that Gentlemen will excuse me, and will allow me to take some Notice of what has been said by the honourable Gentleman who introduced the Debate, and the honourable and learned Gentleman who spoke last but one. As to the Frauds which the honourable Gentleman dwelt so long on, and which the honourable and learned Gentleman was pleased to call heavy and grievous, I believe every Gentleman in the Committee is convinced that there are such Frauds, I believe every Gentleman will agree that they are most heavy and most grievous ; but I do not believe that it is of late only that the honourable Gentleman has come to the Knowledge of them, nor do I believe that the Frauds relating to Wine and Tobacco, are the only Frauds he has heard complained of ; there is hardly a Gentleman in the Kingdom, but has heard of Frauds in almost every Branch of the publick Revenue ; even that honourable Gentleman must have heard many Years ago of the Frauds committed in the Tobacco and Wine-Trade ; Why then was there no Remedy sooner proposed ? How could that Gentleman see the publick Revenue, for which he expresses such a tender Concern, suffer so long by those Frauds, without proposing some Expedient for preventing them : The Expedient now proposed is certainly no such new or extraordinary Thing ; it might have been thought of, I dare say it has often been thought of before this Time, but it seems it was never thought proper to propose it 'till now ; at least it was never 'till now thought necessary ; and yet it cannot be said, but that the Frauds both in Wine and Tobacco were as great formerly as they are at this present Time.

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‘ The honourable Gentleman has been pleased to tell us, that his Thoughts are entirely confined to the two Articles of Wine and Tobacco, and that nothing else was ever designed by him, or any of his Acquaintance, to be subjected to the Laws of Excise: Whatever his Thoughts may have been in Time past, he must excuse me if I say, that I do not believe they will be so much confined in Time to come. Are there not Frauds committed in every Branch of the publick Revenue? Will not that honourable Gentleman think himself as much bound in Duty to lay those Frauds before this House, and propose a Remedy for them, as he now thinks himself bound to expose, and to offer a Remedy for preventing the Frauds in Wine and Tobacco? And if the Remedy now proposed, be deemed by Parliament the most proper and effectual Remedy for preventing the Frauds in Wine and Tobacco, will not that be made use of as an Argument for applying the same Remedy as to the Frauds in every other Branch of the publick Revenue? Will it not be said, You did so and so in the Case of Wine and Tobacco, why should you scruple to apply the same Remedy in the Case now before you? So that, from the Gentleman’s own Reasoning, from his own Way of Arguing as to the Case which he has been pleased now to lay before us, one may see a most plain and evident Design of a much farther Extention of the Laws of Excise; one may clearly see a Design of subjecting every Branch of the publick Revenue to those arbitrary Laws; only the Gentleman has a Mind, it seems, to be a little cunning, and to do it by Piece-meal.

‘ Whatever Opinion the honourable and learned Gentleman may have of the Proposition made by his honourable Friend, it is plain it breathes nothing but the Principles of the most arbitrary and most tyrannical Governments, that have been establish’d in Europe: The enlarging the Power of the Crown; increasing the Number of Dependents on the Crown; rendering the Happiness of the Subject precarious and uncertain, and depending in a Manner entirely on the Good-Will of a Prime Minister, or of those employ’d under him, are the certain Consequences of the Scheme now proposed to us; they are the certain Consequences of all Schemes for extending the Laws of Excise, and are probably the principal Views of all those who set up such Projects. Let Gentlemen but read the political Testaments of Richlieu and Louvois, those Legacies which were left by the Authors to their Master, for instructing him in the Principles of Arbitrary Government; let Gentlemen, I say, but read those Testaments, and they will see, that the Author of this Scheme, whoever he be, must be very well versed in them; they will see how well it agrees with the Principles there laid

laid down for the establishing and supporting of Arbitrary Power. It is for this Reason that the English Nation has always been so averse to Excise-Projects of all Kinds; the very Word *Excise* has always been odious to the People of England. It is true, there has been an Excise established by Parliament, but it was first given as a Purchase for the Court of Wards and Liveries; and tho' that Court was most justly look'd on as one of our greatest Grievances, yet the Purchase has always been reckoned too dear, and that Parliament which gave the Excise has been branded with the infamous Name of a Pensionary Parliament. Even the great King William, notwithstanding all he had done for the People of England, notwithstanding he was most generally belov'd and esteem'd by his Subjects, yet he had like to have suffer'd by a Notion's prevailing among the People, that some new Excises were to have been establish'd. It was publickly said, that we had got a Dutch King, and that therefore we were to be saddled with Dutch Excises: That wise King was so sensible of the Danger he might be expos'd to, by the Prevalence of such a Notion, that he thought it necessary to disavow any such Intention by a publick Declaration.

' I most readily believe, that the honourable and learned Gentleman over the Way comes, at all Times to this House, undetermined as to any Point that is to be brought before us; I believe he always comes resolv'd to be determin'd by what shall be offer'd in the Course of the Debate; but I am very much at a Loss to find out what in the present Debate has determin'd him to be of the Opinion he now seems to be of: He has, indeed, told us, ' That the Reformation propos'd as to the Laws of Excise, is what very much weighs with him: ' He says, ' That the Laws of Excise are to be blunted, and their Edge is to be taken off by ' what is now propos'd.' In this, I must confess my Short-sightedness, I can see no Reformation in what is propos'd; what I look on as most grievous in the Laws of Excise is to continue the same as before: Are not the Officers to have the same oppressive and vexatious Powers continued to them? Are not the Commissioners to have the same dispensing Power with regard to Fines and Forfeitures? Are Trials by Jury to be restor'd to the Subjects? No, all these Grievances are to remain on the same Footing they were before. The Power and Influence of the Crown, by means of the Laws of Excise, is still to be as great as it was before, only there are by this Scheme many Thousands more to be subjected to it: The Method of Appeal is, indeed, to be a little alter'd, but I am afraid the Alteration will not be much for the better; the Expence will be much greater, and the

Redress

Redress as precarious as ever it was before: How then are the Laws of Excise to be blunted? Where is this Reformation so much boasted of, and on which that honourable and learned Gentleman seems solely to ground his Opinion? But it seems he expects, that when this Proposition comes to the Length of a Bill, many fine Things are to be done, many more Things than we have ever yet heard of: If it should come to the Length of a Bill, which I am in great Hopes it never will, he may very probably find himself disappointed; and if that should be the Case, I doubt not but he will be of a different Opinion.

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

‘ Gentlemen have said, that there are no Complaints made of the Laws of Excise, or of the Oppressions of Excise-Officers; but I believe there is no Gentleman in this House, who cannot give some Instances, even within his own Knowledge, of most cruel Oppressions committed by some of those Officers; I am sure there is no Gentleman, who has ever acted in the Country as a Justice of Peace, but can give hundreds of such Instances. The People have complained so often, and so long, of the Severity of those Laws, and the Vexation of those Officers, that they are now weary of complaining: To what Purpose should they complain, since they see there has never as yet been any Provision made for their Redress? Their Complaints have been hitherto disregarded, even by those who are in some Manner bound to take Notice of them.

‘ The honourable Gentleman was pleased to dwell long on the Generosity of the Crown, in giving up the Fines, Forfeitures, and Seizures to the Publick; but, in my Opinion, it will be but a poor Equivalent for the many Oppressions and Exactions, which the People will be exposed to by this Scheme. I must say, that the honourable Gentleman has himself been of late mighty bountiful and generous, in his Offers to the Publick: He has been so gracious as to ask us, ‘ Will you have a Land-Tax of two Shillings in the Pound, or a Land-Tax but of one; or will you have no Land-Tax at all? Will you have your Debts paid? Will you have them soon paid? Tell me but what you want, let me but know how you can be made easy, and it shall be done for you.’ These are most generous Offers, but there is something so very extraordinary, there is something so farcical in them, that really I can hardly mention them without Laughing: It puts me in Mind of the Story of Sir Epicure Mammon in *The Alchymist*; he was gull’d out of his Money by fine Promises; he was promised the Philosopher’s Stone, by which he was to get Mountains of Gold, and every Thing else he could desire; but all ended at last in ‘ some little Thing for curing the Itch.’

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1732-33.

‘ I wish the Gentlemen, who appear so zealous for this Scheme, would have some little Regard to their Constituents. It is well known that it was the Custom among our Ancestors, when any new Device was proposed, to desire Time to have a Conference with their Countries : I am but very little conversant in Books of Law, however I sometimes look into them ; and I must beg Leave to read a Passage or two on this Subject, from my Lord Coke. That great Lawyer, in the 4th Part of his Institutes, Page 14, says, ‘ It is also the Law and Custom of the Parliament, that ‘ when any new Device is moved on the King’s Behalf, in ‘ Parliament, for his Aid, or the like, the Commons may ‘ answer, that they tender’d the King’s Estate, and are ready ‘ to aid the same, only in this new Device they dare not ‘ agree without Conference with their Countries ; whereby ‘ it appeareth, that such Conference is warrantable by the ‘ Law and Custom of Parliament.’ And again, Page 34, he tells us, ‘ At the Parliament holden in the 9th of King ‘ Edward III. When a Motion was made for a Subsidy of ‘ a new Kind, the Commons answer’d, that they would ‘ have Conference with those of their several Countries and ‘ Places, who had put them in Trust, before they treated ‘ of any such Matter.’ If such a Conference was ever necessary upon any Occasion, it is surely necessary before we agree to the Device now offered to us ; a Device which, in my Opinion, strikes at the very Root of our Liberties ; it is, in my way of Thinking, a downright Plan for arbitrary Power ; and in this I am not singular, for there seems to be many Gentlemen of the same Opinion within Doors as well as without ; therefore I must think that it is necessary, it is incumbent upon every Gentleman in this House, at least, to desire to have a Conference with his Constituents, before he agrees to any such Device : This would have been necessary, if we had been entirely ignorant of the Sentiments of our several Countries ; but indeed in the present Case, such a Conference seems to be quite unnecessary ; we already know the Sentiments of our Constituents in relation to the Device now offered to us ; the whole Nation has already, in the most open Manner, declared their Dislike to it ; and therefore I hope the Gentlemen of this Committee will reject it with that Scorn and Contempt it deserves.’

See W. Wyndham.

Sir William Wyndham spoke next :

‘ Sir,

‘ Though it be now very late, yet I must beg Leave to offer my Sentiments upon the Question now in Debate ; for it is a Question of such Importance, that I should not think I discharged the Duty I owe to my Country, without declaring, in the most open and publick Manner, my Dislike
and

and Abhorrence of the Scheme which has been now opened to us. The Scheme, as now explained to us, has, in my Opinion, been no Way misrepresented ; it is the very same with what has been represented to us, it is the very same with that which the Nation has so openly and so generally declared their Dislike to ; it is fraught with all those Evils which were ever attributed to it, and most apparently strikes at the very Fundamentals of our Constitution. The Collecting of any Duties by the Laws of Excise, has, in all Ages, and in all Countries, been looked on as the most grievous and most oppressive Method of collecting Taxes ; and if one Method of raising an Excise can be more oppressive than another, it must be granted, that the Method now proposed to us, of raising this new Excise, must of all Methods be the most oppressive, and the most vexatious to the People : In all Countries, Excises of every Kind are look'd on as Badges of Slavery ; and though the English Nation be now unfortunately subjected to some of them, yet I hope they will never consent to any new Excises, or to any new Extension of the Laws of Excise, let the Pretences for so doing be ever so specious.

Anno 6. Gee. II.

1732-33.

‘ But in the present Case, let us consider what are the specious Pretences made use of, what are the great Advantages proposed, for persuading us to consent to the subjecting so many of his Majesty’s faithful Subjects to be plagued and harrassed by the Officers of Excise. The Suppressing of Frauds, and the Advantages that will accrue therefrom to the Publick and to the fair Trader, is, by what I can find, the only Pretence now made use of ; and yet those Frauds, even aggravated as they were by the honourable Gentleman who proposed this Scheme to us, do amount to a meer Trifle ; so that the Improvement to be made, as to the publick Revenue, will be but very inconsiderable, if any at all, after deducting the additional Charges of Management, which the Publick will become liable to by the great Increase of Officers : This Pretence therefore, even when set in the strongest Light, can be no sufficient Argument for prevailing on us to expose our Constitution to the least Danger, or to subject any of our Fellow-Countrymen to great Hardships : But this Pretence is still more frivolous, since it has been made appear to us, that those Frauds are not at all so considerable as they have been represented ; that all Sorts of Frauds cannot be prevented, even by the Scheme now proposed ; and that many of those Frauds, that have been lately committed, might be prevented by the Laws now in Being, if Care were taken to have proper Officers, and to make those Officers diligent and faithful. I grant, indeed, that the Power and Influence of the Crown will be greatly in-

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creased and improved by this Scheme; I must own, that great Numbers of the People of this Nation will thereby be render'd most submissive and obedient to those that shall hereafter be employ'd by the Crown; and if this be a Motive for agreeing to this Scheme, I must allow that it is a strong one, I believe, indeed, that it is the only real one that any Gentleman can have for giving his Consent to such a Scheme; but with me it is so far from being a Motive for giving my Consent, that it is the strongest Motive I have for giving my Negative to the Question now before us, because I think it absolutely inconsistent with our Constitution.

'Tis true, an Ease to the Landed Interest has upon this, as well as upon some other late Occasions of the like Nature, been thrown out as a Bait for some Gentlemen: But I hope the Landed Gentlemen are not to be caught by such Baits; the Hook appears so plain, that it may be discover'd by any Man of common Sense; however, I must say, that the Method of Arguing is unfair, the Design is wicked; for it is an Endeavour to set the Landed Interest in a Manner at War with the Trading Interest of the Nation; it is endeavouring to destroy that Harmony which always ought to subsist among the People of the same Nation, and which if once destroy'd, would certainly end in the Ruin and Destruction of the whole. But every Landed Gentleman in England will do well to consider what Value their Lands would be of, if for the sake of a small and immediate Ease to themselves, they should be induced to oppress and destroy the Trade of their Country; and whoever considers this, will despise all such Projects, and reject them with that Contempt which they deserve; this is one Reason for the Landed Gentlemen not to accept of the pretended Ease, now offer'd to them, on agreeing to the Scheme now proposed; but there is another strong Reason against it: This House of Commons is mostly composed of Gentlemen of the best Families and greatest Properties, perhaps in the Nation, they have generally a great Family-Interest in the several Counties, Cities and Boroughs they represent; if this Scheme should take Effect, that Interest will soon be destroy'd; and surely no Man will agree to a Scheme, which must inevitably destroy the natural Interest the great Families have, and always ought to have, in their respective Counties; and transfer the whole to the Crown: If this Scheme should once be establish'd, the Power and Influence of the Crown will be so great in all Parts of the Nation, that no Man can depend upon the natural Interest he has in his Country for being a Member of this House; he must in all future Times for such a Favour depend entirely upon the Crown;

and

and this, I hope, there is no Gentleman in this House would chuse to submit to.

ANNO 6. GEO. II.
1732. 33.

‘ Queen Elizabeth, that wise and gracious Princess, govern’d herself by Politicks, quite different from those which seem to be at present in Vogue; she was so far from endeavouring to divide or throw Discord among her Subjects, that she wisely never gave herself up to any one Minister, or to any one Party; she always preserved a Harmony among all her Subjects, and kept a friendly Correspondence with all Parts and all Parties in the Kingdom; she even kept up a constant Personal Correspondence with some of the principal Men in every County, by which she had always a thorough Knowledge of the several Sentiments, as well as Circumstances, of all her Subjects, and most prudently adapted all her Measures to what she found to be the Sentiments of the Generality of the Nation; more particularly she took Care to avoid every Thing that appeared to be disagreeable to the People: To this wise Policy it is owing, that her Reign makes such a glorious Figure in the English History; to this it is owing, that she reign’d with more Popularity than any Prince since her Time, except her Royal Successor Queen Anne: Thus she reigned, and reign’d absolutely, but so as I could wish every Prince in England to do; she reign’d absolutely over the Hearts and Affections of her Subjects, and thereby she had both their Persons and their Puries always at Command.

‘ Gentlemen, ask, Why do you complain of this Scheme? Here is no new Tax to be imposed; there is nothing proposed but only a new Method of raising those Taxes which are already due by the Law: But I would have Gentlemen remember, that this Nation has once already been more grievously oppressed, by a new Method of raising and collecting that Money that was before due by Law, than they ever were by any new Tax that was ever laid on them: I have already mention’d the Reign of Queen Elizabeth; let us but look a little farther back, and we shall find that the People were most terribly harrassed, and the Nation almost destroy’d, by a grievous Method of collecting and raising that which was due by the Laws then in Being. Empson and Dudley, those two noted Ways and Means-Men, those two wicked Ministers, knowing the Avarice of their Master, and the insatiable Desire he had for Money, concluded that no Scheme would be more agreeable to him, than those which would fill his Coffers by draining the Purfes of his Subjects; and this they did, without imposing any new Taxes, they laid no new or illegal Burdens on the People, they did it by a severe and rigorous Execution of the Laws that had before been enacted: But what was their Fate?

They

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They had the Misfortune to outlive their Master : But his Son, as soon as he came to the Throne, took off both their Heads ; and in this he did justly, tho' he did it against Law : They had done nothing contrary to Law ; they had only put the Laws severely in Execution, and what they did was in Obedience to the Command of the King his Father ; yet that could be no Excuse for them ; their Manner of executing those Laws was so grievous and oppressive upon the Subjects, that nothing less than their Lives could be admitted of as a sufficient Atonement to the People ; and certainly, that Oppression which is committed under the Sanction of the Laws, or of the Royal Authority, must always be deemed the most heinously criminal, and ought to be the most severely punish'd.

‘ There never was in any Reign a Scheme or Project attempted, so much to the Dislike and Dissatisfaction of the People in general ; the whole Nation has already so openly declared their Aversion to the Scheme now offered to us, that I am surprized to see it insisted on ; the very proposing of such a Scheme to the House of Commons, after so many Remonstrances against it, I must think most audacious ; it is in a Manner flying in the Face of the whole People of England ; and since they have already declared against it, God forbid that we who are their Representatives should declare for it.’

Sir R. Walpole.

To this Speech of Sir William Wyndham's Sir Robert Walpole replied as follows :

Sir,

‘ As I was obliged, when I opened the Affair now before you, to take up a great deal of your Time, I then imagined that I should not have been under a Necessity of giving you any farther Trouble ; but when such Things are thrown out, Things which in my Opinion are quite foreign to the Debate ; when the ancient Histories, not only of this, but other Countries, are ransack'd for Characters of wicked Ministers, in order to adapt them to the present Times, and to draw Parallels between them and some modern Characters, to which they bear no other Resemblance than that they were Ministers, it is impossible for one to sit still : Of late Years, I have dealt but little in the Study of History, but I have a very good Prompter by me, [*meaning Sir Philip Yorke*] and by his Means I can recollect, that the Case of Empson and Dudley, mention'd by the honourable Gentleman who spoke last, was so very different from any Thing that can possibly be presumed from the Scheme now before us, that I wonder how it was possible to lug them into the Debate : The Case as to them was, that they had by Virtue of old and obsolete Laws, most unjustly extorted great Sums of Money from People,
who,

who, as was pretended, had become liable to great Pains and Penalties, by having been guilty of Breaches of those obsolete Laws, which for many Years before had gone entirely into Disuse. I must say, and I hope most of those that hear me think, that it is very unjust and unfair to draw any Parallel between the Characters of those two Ministers and mine, which was, I suppose, what the honourable Gentleman meant to do, when he brought that Piece of History into the Debate. If I ever endeavour to raise Money from the People, or from any Man whatever by oppressive or illegal Means, if my Character should ever come to be in any Respect like theirs, I shall deserve their Fate: But while I know myself to be innocent, I shall depend upon the Protection of the Laws of my Country; as long as they can protect me I am safe; and if that Protection should fail, I am prepared to submit to the worst that can happen. I know that my political and ministerial Life has by some Gentlemen been long wished at an End, but they may ask their own disappointed Hearts, how vain their Wishes have been; and as for my natural Life, I have lived long enough to learn to be as easy about parting with it, as any Man can well be.

‘ As to those Clamours which have been raised without Doors, and which are now so much insisted on, it is very well known by whom and by what Methods they were raised, and it is no difficult Matter to guess with what Views; but I am very far from taking them to be the Sense of the Nation, or believing that the Sentiments of the Generality of the People were thereby expressed. The most Part of the People concerned in those Clamours did not speak their own Sentiments, they were play’d by others like so many Puppets; it was not the Puppets that spoke, it was those behind the Curtain that play’d them, and made them speak whatever they had a Mind.

‘ There is now a most extraordinary Concourse of People at our Door; I hope it will not be said, that all those People came there of themselves naturally, and without any Instigation from others; for to my certain Knowledge, some very odd Methods were used to bring such Multitudes hither; circular Letters were wrote, and sent by the Beadles, in the most publick and unprecedented Manner, round almost every Ward in the City, summoning them upon their Peril to come down this Day to the House of Commons: This I am certain of, because I have now one of those Letters in my Pocket, signed by a Deputy of one of the greatest Wards in the City of London, and sent by the Beadle to one of the Inhabitants of that Ward; and I know that such Letters were sent in the same Manner almost to every Liveryman
and

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and Tradesman in that Ward : And by the same Sort of unwarrantable Methods have the Clamours been raised, almost in every other Part of the Nation.

‘ Gentlemen may say what they please of the Multitudes now at our Door, and in all the Avenues leading to this House ; they may call them a modest Multitude if they will ; but whatever Temper they were in when they came hither, it may be very much alter’d now, after having waited so long at our Door : It may be a very easy Matter for some designing seditious Person to raise a Tumult and Disorder among them, and when Tumults are once begun, no Man knows where they may end ; he is a greater Man than any I know in the Nation, that could with the same Ease appease them ; for this Reason I must think, that it was neither prudent nor regular to use any Methods for bringing such Multitudes to this Place, under any Pretence whatever. Gentlemen may give them what Name they think fit ; it may be said that they came hither as humble Supplicants, but I know whom the Law calls Sturdy Beggars ; and those who brought them hither could not be certain, but that they might have behav’d in the same Manner.’



Sir John Barnard rising up to speak, and there being a Disorder in the Committee, Sir John Hynde Cotton speaks to Order.

Hereupon Sir John Barnard rose up to speak, but there being a Disorder in the Committee, and the Question being loudly call’d for, Sir John Hynde Cotton stood up, and spoke thus :

‘ To Order, Sir, I hope you will call Gentlemen to Order ; there is now a Gentleman up to speak, a Gentleman who speaks as well as any Gentleman in this House, and who deserves Attention as much as any Gentleman that ever spoke in this House : Besides, he is one of the Representatives of the greatest and richest City in Europe, a City which is greatly interested in this Debate, and therefore he must be heard ; and I desire, Sir, that you will call to Order, that the Committee may shew him at least that Respect, which is due to every Gentleman who is a Member of this House.’

After this the Committee being called to Order, Sir John Barnard went on :

Sir,

‘ I know of no irregular or unfair Methods that were used to call People from the City to your Door ; it is certain that any Set of Gentlemen or Merchants may lawfully desire their Friends, they may even write Letters, and they may send those Letters by whom they please, to desire the Merchants of Figure and Character to come down to the Court of Requests and to our Lobby, in order to solicit their Friends and Acquaintance against any Scheme or Project, which they think may be prejudicial to them. This is the undoubted

Right

The Committee being call’d to Order, Sir J. Barnard goes on.

Right of the Subject, and what has been always practised upon all Occasions. The honourable Gentleman talks of Sturdy Beggars, I do not know what Sort of People may be now at our Door, because I have not lately been out of the House; but I believe they are the same Sort of People that were there when I came last into the House, and then I can assure you that I saw none, but such as deserve the Name of Sturdy Beggars as little as the honourable Gentleman himself, or any Gentleman whatever. It is well known that the City of London was sufficiently apprised of what we were this Day to be about; where they got their Information I do not know, but I am very certain that they had a right Notion of the Scheme which has been now opened to us; and they were so generally and zealously bent against it, that whatever Methods may have been used to call them hither, I am sure it would have been impossible to have found any legal Methods to have prevented their coming hither.'

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Then after some farther Debate, the Question being put upon the Motion made by Sir Robert Walpole, it was carried in the Affirmative, by 266 Voices against 205. The Reader will find the Names of the Members, who voted *Pro* and *Con* in this Debate, in the *APPENDIX*.

After this three other Motions were agreed to, without any Division; which, with the first Resolution, are as follows. I. That it is the Opinion of this Committee, that the Subsidy and additional Duty upon Tobacco of the British Plantations, granted by an Act of the 12th of King Charles II. and the Impost thereon, granted by an Act of the 1st of King James II. and also the one third Subsidy thereon, granted by an Act of the 2d of Queen Anne, amounting in the whole to 5½ d. *per* Pound, for several Terms of Years in the said respective Acts mention'd, and which have since been continued and made perpetual, subject to Redemption by Parliament, shall from and after the 24th Day of June 1733, cease and determine. II. That in lieu of the said Duties so to be determined, there should be granted to his Majesty an Inland Duty of 4 d. *per* Pound upon all Tobacco imported from the British Plantations, to be paid before the taking the same out of the Warehouse. III. That the Inland Duties, to be raised and levied upon Tobacco, be appropriated and applied to the same Uses and Purposes, as the former Duties upon Tobacco, to be determined, were appropriated and applied. IV. That all Fines, Penalties, Forfeitures, and Seizures, to arise by the said Duties, be apply'd to the Use of the Publick, except so much thereof as should be allowed to the Informers or Prosecutors.'

Four Resolutions
of the Committee
of the whole
House, in pursu-
ance of Sir Robert
Walpole's Motion
relating to the
Excise-Scheme;

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Which being reported to the House, and a Motion made for agreeing with the Committee in the First Resolution, it occasions a fresh Debate.

Sir John Barnard.

March 16. Sir Charles Turner reported the above Resolutions to the House; and a Motion being made for agreeing with the Committee in the first Resolution, Sir John Barnard stood up and spoke as follows:

Sir,

‘ Though the Resolutions which have been now read to us, were agreed to by a Majority of those present in the Committee, yet I can make no Manner of Doubt, but that now, after Gentlemen have had Time to consider that Affair seriously, there will be many of a different Opinion from what they were of in the Committee; for my own Part, I must say, that the more I consider that Scheme on which these Resolutions are founded, the more Objections I find to it, and the less I find in those Arguments which were offered in Support of it. One of the chief Ends proposed by this Scheme is, the preventing of those Frauds which have formerly been committed in the Tobacco-Trade; but, if we particularly examine those Frauds we shall find, that every one of them may either be prevented by the Laws already in Being, or they are such as cannot be effectually prevented by any Thing in the Scheme proposed.

‘ The Fraud which has been committed upon the Weighing of the Tobacco at the Custom-House, and likewise that of exporting one Sort of Tobacco for another, is altogether owing, as has been already observed, to a Neglect of Duty in the Officers, and not to any Defect in the Laws: And as to the Frauds of running or re-landing Tobacco, after it has been enter’d for Exportation and has received the Drawbacks, which are those by which the Publick has and always will suffer most, there is nothing in the Scheme that can any Way contribute to the preventing them; for it is not the Manner of collecting of Duties, but the Amount of the Duties, which occasions Smuggling and Running in all Countries, and in all Branches of Trade; and since the Duties on Tobacco are by this Scheme to be as high, or very near as high, as they were before, we may expect there will be as much Smuggling as there was formerly; where the Temptation is great, the Number of the Tempted will increase in Proportion, let the Danger they run be never so great.

‘ As for the Warehouses proposed, if there be any Thing in that Part of the Scheme, which may be of Use against Smuggling, it is not to this Scheme, that the Proposition owes its Birth; it is what the Merchants themselves have long ago desired; and for that Purpose I drew up some Time ago a Clause to have been offer’d to this House, which I shewed to the honourable Gentleman on the Floor; and at that Time the Affair would have been pushed, but there
arose

arose some Disputes and Differences among the Merchants themselves, which occasioned its being deferred : That Part of the Scheme therefore I shall find no Fault with, I believe no Merchant will, but then we would have it without the Laws of Excise ; for this Reason the honourable Gentleman cries out against the Merchants, as a very unreasonable Set of Men ; he says, that they formerly desired to have Warehouses, and yet now they refuse to accept of them. But do not Gentlemen see where the Difference lies ? The Merchants desire to have Warehouses without an Excise, and the honourable Gentleman will not, it seems, favour us with the one, without loading us with the other.

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As to what the Civil List may get by this Scheme, it will depend entirely upon the Effect the Scheme may have in relation to the Preventing of Frauds ; but it is certain, that if the publick Revenue get any Thing by the Scheme, the Civil List will get in Proportion, or rather more ; for, by what is now proposed, that Part of the Duty, which goes towards the Civil List, is still to be payable upon Importation at the Custom-House, and to be drawn back on Exportation, as before : Now it is manifest, that this will be a great Advantage to the Civil List, and often a great Inconvenience to the Merchant ; for once in every six Weeks that Money will be carry'd to the Exchequer, and when once it is lodged there, I believe it will there remain ; it will never be sent back to the Custom-House to answer any Occasion there may be for it at that Place ; so that when the Merchant comes to export a Quantity of Tobacco, and to call for his Drawback, if the Commissioners have none of that Civil List Money in their Hands, they cannot apply the Produce of any other Branch of the publick Revenue to that Use, and therefore the Merchant must wait for his Drawback 'till some new Tobacco be imported ; by which Means the Crown may often have the Use of that Money, which should have been applied to the Payment of the Merchant, perhaps for near a Twelvemonth at a Time ; and the Laying out of that Money for so long a Time, may often happen to be of dangerous Consequence to the Merchant's Credit.

The honourable Gentleman talk'd of making London a free Port, I wish with all my Heart he would do so ; it is certainly what every Merchant wishes to see done, and what would greatly contribute to the Increase and Encouragement of the Trade of this Nation ; but how such a Pretence can be set up in favour of the Scheme now before us, I cannot comprehend, for I can see nothing in the Scheme that has the least Tendency towards producing an Effect so much to be wished for : On the contrary, it appears evident to me, that by this Scheme, the Port of London, and all the

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other Ports of the Kingdom, will be so far from being made free, that at every one of them the Merchant will be subjected to more Trouble and Expence, both upon Importation and Exportation, than ever he was before. 'Tis true that upon the Importation of Tobacco, the Merchant was formerly obliged to pay down the whole Duties, or give his Bond with sufficient Sureties for them; but this was never any Hardship upon the Merchant, because, if he had ready Money, he advanced it for the prompt Payment of the Duties, and he had an Allowance for so doing; which was but a reasonable Allowance, considering how long he was sometimes obliged to keep his Tobacco on his Hands, before he met with a Market either for Home-Consumption or Exportation, and how many Months Credit he was often after that obliged to give to the Buyer; and if he had not ready Money at Command, he could formerly give his Bond for the whole Duties with two sufficient Sureties, which a Man of tolerable Credit could always easily find; whereas by this Scheme, it seems, every Merchant-Importer of Tobacco must pay some Part of the Duties at the Entry, let him make what Shift he will for the Money, which to a poor Man is a new Hardship; and to a rich Man the Payment of that Part of the Duties in ready Money, is a greater Hardship than the Payment of the whole, considering that he has no Allowance for prompt Payment, as to that Part of the Duties which he is obliged to pay in ready Money.

'I am surpris'd to hear any Gentleman say, that Brewers make no Complaints on account of their being subjected to the Laws of Excise; I do not know what Sort of Brewers those Gentlemen may converse with, but I never conversed with any who did not complain of it as a very great Grievance, nor did I ever meet with any who could not give very substantial Reasons for their Complaints. There are many particular Ways by which the Officers of Excise may be troublesome and vexatious to the Brewer; but there is one which is generally practis'd all over the Kingdom, and that is, that those Officers not only gauge and take an Account of their Liquors, but likewise oblige the Brewers to shew them their Books as often as they have a Mind; by which Means they not only pry into all the Secrets and Mysteries of their Trade, but likewise into their Circumstances and Fortunes. Can any Gentleman look upon this as no Grievance? Is it not a Hardship upon any Man to have the Secrets and Mysteries of his Trade expos'd to every little Fellow, whom the Commissioners of Excise shall please to put in Authority over him? But is it not still a greater Hardship, for a Man to be oblig'd to discover his Circumstances

stances to one who is an utter Stranger to him, perhaps to one who is his most implacable Enemy?

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‘ The honourable Gentleman, I find, values himself much upon the small Increase of Excise-Officers that is to be made by his Scheme; but then he seems to forget the Warehouse-Keepers; they, as well as the other Officers of Excise, are all to be named by the Crown, and paid by the Publick, consequently they are certainly to be called Officers of the Revenue: They will be as expensive to the Publick, and as great Slaves to the Administration, as any other Sort of Officers whatever. As there are to be a great Number of Tobacco-Warehouses in Britain, there must be a great Number of them employ’d to attend those Warehouses as often as there shall be Occasion for them, otherwise it will be impossible for the Merchant to manage or dispose of the Goods he has there lodged; from whence I must conclude, that the Number of those Warehouse-keepers will be much more than double the Number of the other new Officers to be added by this Scheme.

Gentlemen seem to make light of the Trouble that Merchants will be put to by those Warehouse-keepers; they think it will be no Inconvenience to the Merchant to be debarred all Access to his Goods, but at those Hours when the Warehouse-keeper is to be obliged to attend him. Those, who argue at this Rate, seem to know but little of the various Accidents that happen in Trade; but this is not the only Inconvenience that even the Merchant is to be exposed to by this Scheme; he must, for every Quantity of Tobacco he sells, make a Journey, or send a Messenger to the Permit-Office for a Permit, which must necessarily put him to a great deal of Trouble and Expence; and therefore, that the Merchant may be as much eased as possible, I hope that, as soon as those publick Warehouses are all appointed, there will be two little Lodges like Centry-Boxes, built somewhere adjoining to each Warehouse, one for the Warehouse-keeper, and the other for the Officer who is to grant the Permits.

‘ It has been said, that Liberty has nothing to do in the Question now before us; but, in my Opinion, if it is not deeply concern’d in this Question, it never can be concern’d in any Question that can come before this House: Is not every Man’s House looked on as his Asylum? Is then the giving a Power to any little paltry Exciseman, to enter People’s Houses at all Times of the Day and Night, no Encroachment upon the Liberty of those People? If it is not an Encroachment upon a Man’s Liberty, it certainly is a very direct one upon his Property, and of Consequence it will be found to be an Encroachment upon his Liberty; for can
any

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any Man be said to be free, who must submit to, and be the humble Slave of his Exciseman, otherwise he must expect no Quiet or Comfort within his own Dwelling House: The most blameless Conduct cannot secure him against Vexation; and no Man can be said to be free, who cannot depend upon his Innocence for his Protection: An Officer invested with such Power, may fall upon twenty Ways to teaze and vex the most innocent Man upon Earth: I know, that one of my Acquaintance, who has the Misfortune to be subject to the Laws of Excise already in Being, was, for a considerable Time together, regularly visited by his Exciseman at the Hour the Family went to Dinner; and if they had but civilly ask'd the Gentleman to call at any other Time, his immediate Answer was, 'No, Sir, I am in a Hurry, I have a great deal of other Business to attend besides yours; I must immediately visit such a Place; if you will not allow me, I must go, and I know what to do.' By this rude Behaviour the whole Family was disturbed, and one of them was always obliged to get up from Dinner, in order to go and let him visit such Places in the House as he had a Mind.'

'These are the Fellows who, by this fine Scheme, are to be put into every Man's House that is a Dealer in either of the two Commodities of Tobacco or Wine: These are the Lord Danes, who are to be by Law appointed to lord it over every such Dealer and his whole Family: We know what was the Fate of the Lord Danes we had formerly in England, and I shall be very little surprized if these new ones meet with the same Fate. In short, Gentlemen may dress up this Scheme in what Shape they please; but to one who considers it coolly and impartially as I have done, it must appear in its true Colours. I am convinced that it will produce nothing but the most mischievous Consequences, not only to those who are to be immediately affected by it, but likewise to the Liberties and Properties of the Nation in general; and therefore I am entirely against agreeing to the Resolutions of the Committee.'

Mr Walpole.

Mr Bramston.
 Lord Hervey.
 Sir Thomas Robinson.

Mr Horatio Walpole spoke next for agreeing with the Committee; Mr Bramston against it; Lord Hervey for it; then Sir Thomas Robinson stood up and spoke as follows.

Sir,

'As I had not an Opportunity in the Committee of giving my Opinion in this Question, I hope I shall be indulged the Liberty of doing it now, since I find the whole is to be canvassed over again. I will take up as little of your Time as possible, in making a few Observations on the Scheme itself as it now appears to us, and on what has fell from some Gentlemen in the Course of this Debate.

‘ I cannot help expressing my Surprize, to hear so often repeated the cruel Usage the English Merchants have met with of late : For God’s Sake, let all that has been said in this House, during the Time this Affair has been upon the Anvil, be fairly and impartially canvassed, and ’twill come out to be against the unfair Dealers in Wine and Tobacco, and against them only ; why should Gentlemen therefore apply it to Merchants in General ? Give me Leave to say, whoever makes such Application, ’tis they who pin the Question upon the whole Body of Merchants, and not those Gentlemen who think the Method proposed of collecting this Revenue, will secure to the Publick what they have an undoubted Right to. All that has been said on this Head, and what we are now endeavouring to do by this Bill, is calculated to affect those Men only, whose Artifices and Cunning have hitherto evaded the Customs, against whom no less Caution can secure that Duty to the publick Purse, which every Consumer of this Commodity has an indisputable Right to have fairly collected.

‘ Surely no Gentleman, who appears for this Scheme, would for his own Sake protect or countenance it, if he imagined the Success of it would either affect our Trade, or the Body of the English Merchants immediately concerned in the Exportation of our Manufactures, or by way of Return for them in the Importation of foreign Productions useful and necessary to us ; for it is to our Trade, and to our Merchants, that the real Causes of the Wealth and Prosperity of this Nation are principally to be ascribed : But this Scheme is not intended to affect, nor will, I think, in any Shape reach these Men, which when they come impartially to consider, they must be sensible of ; and then they will be able to judge, whether they have been alarmed at the Approach of real, or only at the Noise of imaginary Dangers.

‘ I am very sorry to hear so often urged, that these Restrictions proposed only for the preventing of Frauds will be a Discouragement to Trade in general ; for the natural Conclusion from thence would seem to be, that Frauds and Trade were inseparable : As the very Foundation of this Scheme, appears to me to be intended for the Improvement of the publick Revenue by the Discouragement of Frauds ; when it is so often affirmed, that it will also be a Discouragement to Trade, a Stranger in the Gallery, who was to hear our Debates, would naturally imagine that a Continuance of, or a Connivance at Frauds, was in this Country a necessary Encouragement to Trade.

‘ As this Bill appears to me to be attended with certain Advantages to the Tobacco-Trade, and as I should be glad to be set right if I am mistaken ; I beg Leave to ask a few Questions

Questions of those who are conversant in Trade : Whether high Duties on Goods imported are not a great Weight on every Branch of Trade so loaded ; as it not only obliges the Merchant to keep a double Stock in ready Money, but of course confines that Trade to a very narrow Circle of Dealers, and surely it never can be the Interest of a Trading Nation to encourage Monopolies ? Then I must ask, Whether, as the Law now stands, the Tobacco-Trade has not this Hardship attending it ? If it be so, I would ask, Whether this Clog is not entirely removed by this Scheme ? no Duty being to be paid at Importation, nor any Money demanded 'till the Factor has made his Bargain with the Retailer, who is to pay the whole Duty ?

‘ Is it not another allowed Maxim in Trade, that one of the greatest Temptations to Frauds are large Drawbacks on Goods exported, nay the very Parent of Frauds in this Commodity ? If this be a Fact, is not this Motive to Frauds entirely removed, there being by this Scheme no Temptation whatever to Frauds on this Head ? for by this Scheme as now amended, there is no Part of the Duty to be paid at Importation, there is not a Farthing of the Duty ever to be paid for the Tobacco which shall hereafter be re-exported ; so that the honourable Gentleman who spoke first, and who always speaks so well and with so much Weight in this House, has in this Particular entirely mistaken the Scheme now before us.

‘ Has not the Method of Bonding the Duties, 'till very lately at least, been universally allowed to be often fatal to both the Planters and Factors, and as often detrimental to the Publick ? Is not this Hardship quite obviated by this Scheme ? Is not Bonding entirely out of the present Question ?

‘ Were not the Charges in the Bills of Sale from the Factor to his Planter a very great Hardship on the latter ? According to all those I have seen, they never amounted to less than 25 *per Cent*, and oftner to much more, on the whole neat Produce returned to the Planter for his Tobacco. I don't mean to accuse the Factor of taking an extravagant or unjust Gain on this Head : but what I think we are now contending to remove, is the Pretence for and the Foundation of these Charges, which have been so greatly detrimental to that Trade, and so great a Hardship on the Virginia and Maryland Planters, who now send you a Merchandize that proves to this Nation, by the great Quantities re-exported to foreign Markets, a very beneficial Branch of your Commerce ; and if something be not now done in their Behalf, I am told from very good Hands, we shall run the Risque of losing this Staple of Tobacco : Then 'twill be too late to consider

what

what Methods are best for collecting the Duties on it ; and therefore, were there no other Motive for this Bill, this Consideration alone would weigh greatly with me, to make a Trial, at least, of the Method now proposed for giving Relief to so considerable a Part of our American Colonies.

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‘ Now I am up, Sir, give me Leave to remind Gentlemen, that, as the Law now stands 4³d. neat Money, at least, is paid on each Pound of Tobacco, immediately on Importation, tho’ the Importer takes the Advantage of all the Discounts on prompt Payment, otherwise the Duty comes higher : But by this Scheme, the whole Duty will be at the highest but 4³d. *per* Pound Weight, and will not be demanded ’till the Tobacco is taken out of the Warehouse for Home-Consumption, and therefore may sometimes not be paid ’till eighteen Months or two Years after the landing of the Tobacco : Let therefore who will advance the Money, this farther Credit given by the Publick, for the Payment of the Duty, must be a certain Benefit to this Trade ; and thus, by Postponing the Payment of the Duties ’till so much nearer the Time of Consumption, the Dealers in Tobacco will be enabled, and ought to afford it to the Consumer on more reasonable Terms.

‘ If then this Scheme be found to be no real Detriment to the fair Merchant, and a certain Benefit to the Planters, I believe in another Particular it will be a demonstrable Advantage to the Publick, I mean an Improvement of the Revenue : But what appears to me pretty extraordinary is, to hear that Improvement urged as one of the chief Objections against the whole Scheme, because the Civil-List Revenue will also of course receive some Increase. Give me Leave to say, that whatever Appearance of Weight there might have been in this Objection before the Scheme was known, yet now when it comes to be considered, that the Crown in Return gives up to the Publick all Forfeitures and Seizures, this Objection can be of little Weight : But surely this could never have been thought a sufficient Objection for the Legislature to refuse a Remedy against the known Frauds, practised in the Collection of the publick Revenues, on account of its preventing those practised against the Crown ; especially, when even this Improvement of the King’s Income is no more than what was, in Effect, granted by the Parliament, when they appropriated the Produce of those Duties to his Majesty for Life

‘ But since it is said, that this Alteration in the Method of collecting the Duty on Tobacco will be such an Augmentation to the Revenue, though no new Tax be laid on, nor an Addition made to any one now in Being, it may be asked, From whence this Augmentation will arise? To this the

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bare Enumeration of the several Frauds, at present practised in the Collection of this Duty, would be a sufficient Answer; especially, if we consider the large Sum, which the Frauds that have actually been discovered yearly amount to, and that it cannot be supposed, that one fifth Part of the Frauds, which have really been committed, have ever come to the Knowledge of the Publick, or of those intrusted with the Collecting of this Duty: But as the honourable Gentleman, who opened the Debate in the Committee, has so fully and so demonstrably shewn the Particulars of these unlawful Transactions; and as there are in this House so many Gentlemen, thoroughly acquainted with the Course of the publick Revenues, who can speak more minutely to the Nature of these Frauds than I am capable of doing, I shall not enter into a Detail of them; but only take Notice, that there have been some Instances, where a tripple Fraud has been committed in the Disposall of the same individual Parcel of Tobacco; he, indeed, who practises this Method, must be very adroit in the Business of Smuggling, but it is certain it has been practised: The unfair Trader has contrived to receive the full Duty twice from the Publick, without having ever paid it once to the Publick; he has received from the Government the Drawbacks upon a Quantity of Tobacco, which he found Means to import without paying any Duty; and by again running the same Tobacco from Holland in small Parcels, he has a second Time received the Drawbacks from the Consumers, by selling it to them as if the Duties had been honestly paid; and the Difficulty to prevent this Kind of Frauds, as there is but one Check in the Customs, is almost insurmountable; since, in some Cases, the unfair Dealer in Tobacco may very well afford to give such Bribes to the Custom-house Officer, as will even more than compensate to him the Loss of his Place, if he should be discovered.

‘ So that in this Light, the Parties in this Contest are, the Publick, the Planter, and the fair Trader on one Side; and the unfair Dealer only on the other. It is a Duty the Nation pays; the Planter and the fair Trader feel the Inconvenience of it, but the Benefit is intercepted by the fraudulent Dealer; and in this View your Landed Consumers of Tobacco have doubly paid the Duty; they have paid it once by buying the Tobacco at an advanced Price, as if the Duty had been paid by the Seller; and again by a future Call upon them by the Legislature, to make good the Deficiency occasioned by the Frauds of the Sellers; so that by this Method of Taxation, a Duty has been laid on one Subject, which another has by Artifice not only prevented coming in-

to the publick Purse, but has converted towards the supporting or enriching of himself.

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But there is another Reason, which will have the greatest Weight with me, for coming into this Proposition, and that is, because I think, that in its Consequences, the Landholders of Great Britain will find a considerable Relief. As long as I can remember, I have always heard the Land-Tax complain'd of, as one of the most unequal and most grievous of our Taxes; unequal, as it is only paid by a Part of those who possess Property in Great Britain, and so great a Disproportion is there in this Particular, that as our Property is now divided, I believe one may say, the Money arising by this Tax, is paid only by five out of six of those who possess the Riches of this Nation; and it has hitherto been the more grievous, as there was no Prospect that any one of this Generation, would have been relieved from the Burthen of it. From Land alone, 64 Millions and a Half have been raised since the Revolution, and an Estate of 1000 l. a Year, fully ceis'd since that Time, has paid 6450 l. which Sum amounts to near one sixth Part of the whole Produce of such an Estate in that Time; so that by taking it at an Average, the Landholders of these Estates thus ceis'd, have paid very near a sixth Part of the gross Produce of their Estates for 44 Years successively, which bears no manner of Proportion to what has been paid by any other Set of Men, towards defraying the Charges of the Government since that Time. This has always been most justly reputed a Grievance upon the Landholders, yet now when a Scheme is offer'd, which, as it appears to me, would be a certain Relief to the Landed Interest, a new Language, a new Opinion has started up, and prevails, at least without Doors, that the Lands of Great Britain should still continue to carry that Burthen, which, till very lately, all Mankind were unanimous, they ought to be relieved from.

If some Gentlemen may think there can be any material Weight thrown into the Scale of the Crown, by the Addition of a few Excise-Officers, let them on the other Side reflect on the Relief given by this Scheme to the Landholders of Great Britain, who always have been, and ever must be, in Time of Trial and Necessity, the real and solid Support of the Liberties of the Nation.

And as the Landed Interest must be allowed to be our principal Strength, all Attempts to invade our Liberties must prove unsuccessful, while the Gentlemen of Landed Estates shall continue resolute, and retain sufficient Force to oppose any arbitrary Designs: Any Thing therefore, that tends to put them upon a better Footing, and to encrease their Substance, strengthens our Constitution in the most essential

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Part ; for this Reason, when the Ease that will be given to Landholders is in this View impartially consider'd, the Addition of a few Excisemen, with Salaries of 40 or 50 l. a Year each, will not have that Weight in this Day's Debate, which at first Sight it might seem to carry with it.

‘ Sir, I have mention'd the Advantages which, as it appears to me, will naturally arise to the Publick Revenue, to the fair Trader, to the industrious Planter, and to the Landholder by this Scheme ; and I think there is another Benefit attending it, which Gentlemen do not seem to give sufficient Attention to, I mean the Reformation that will be made on this Occasion in the Laws of Excise ; for tho' the Extention of them, as they now stand, might have been thought by some a strong Objection to this Scheme, however beneficial in other Respects it might prove to the Publick, yet I think the Weight of this Objection is greatly removed, when we consider, that the Alteration now propos'd will take away many of those Powers, which might in Time to come have been abused to the Oppression of the Subject. One of the most material Objections I ever heard started was, the Want of a proper Appeal from the Determination of the Commissioners of Excise ; but this, I think, is entirely obviated by the allowing of an Appeal from those Gentlemen to three Judges, chosen from the different Courts in Westminster-Hall ; or from the Justices of Peace to the Judges of Assize in their respective Circuits ; who are to determine in a summary Way, without either Delay or any considerable Expence to the Parties concern'd. Now whatever Influence the Nomination of these Officers by the Crown might have on their Actions, or however regardless their Power. being uncontrollable, might make them in their Determinations, this Check must prevent the Execution of their Intentions, were they inclined to abuse their Power in Favour of the Crown ; it will certainly make them more cautious in giving Judgment, when they shall know, when they shall reflect, that their Judgments are liable to be canvass'd in a superior Court, where no Favour, where no Interest can screen an ill Action : The Judges to whom the Appeal must be made have their Offices for Life, and therefore cannot reasonably be supposed to be biass'd, so as to countenance any unlawful Steps of the Commissioners, let them be the Favourites of any Minister whatever, or let the Party oppress'd, let the Party complaining, be never so obnoxious to an Administration.

‘ There is also another Benefit that will attend the Success of this Scheme, which is the Repeal of an Act made in the 11th Year of the late King, which obliges People to accuse themselves : As this is certainly a very great Grievance,

ance, the Repeal must be a very agreeable Relief to those who are subject to it. I hope therefore, if this Question passes, when the Blanks in the Bill come to be filled up in the Committee, those Gentlemen, who may think that there are any unnecessary Clauses in the Laws of Excise, will take this favourable Opportunity to have those Laws review'd; and by the Addition of proper Clauses to the Bill now to be brought in, to extend the Regulations of them in Behalf of the Subject, as far as may not leave the Duties under the Management of the Commissioners open to gross Frauds.

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‘ Upon the whole, I believe the Benefits proposed by this Scheme, by an Improvement of the publick Revenue in preventing Frauds, will be a certain Relief to the Landed Interest; and the only real Objection that ever could be to such a Design, was the Method by which it was to be effected: But that, I think, as I said before, is in a great measure removed, by the Mitigation of those Methods of proceeding in Excise-Laws, which seemed most to infringe the Liberties of the Subject, and which Alteration may, nay is designed to be extended to the other Branches of the Revenue, subject to the same Laws.

‘ This Scheme therefore, as it is intended to be a Review of the Excise-Laws, and an Amendment of the Rigour of those Parts of them where less Severity would secure the Duty to the Publick, appears in this Light as much in Favour of the Subject as of the Revenue; and as such, when it comes to be rightly apprehended, and the Benefits attending it are felt and diffused through the whole Nation, I believe it will soon take a more favourable Turn among the People; the ill Impressions of it that may now be industriously spread abroad, I should think, would soon subside and be forgotten.

‘ I beg Pardon, Sir, for taking up so much more of your Time than I at first intended. I now only add, that since upon the Examination of the particular Merits of this Scheme, the Advantages proposed by it appear to me to be certain; and of such a Nature as not only to increase the publick Revenue, without any new Tax on the Subject or Addition to any one now in Being; to advance the Interest of our Trade and Plantations; and also at the same Time to raise the Value of the Lands of Great Britain, I shall therefore readily give my Assent to it.’

Sir Thomas Aston, Member for Leverpoole, spoke next against the Motion for agreeing with the Committee, and took Notice, ‘ That it was his Misfortune to know too much of the Influence, that the Officers of the Customs and Excise had at Elections; for at his own Election there were many of the Voters were so free and open, as to come to him and tell

Sir T. Aston,

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tell him that they would vote for him rather than any other, but that those Officers had threatned to ruin them if they did; and others told him, that they had Promises either for themselves or their Sons to be made Officers in the Customs or Excise by his Antagonist; and as their Bread depended upon getting those Promises fulfilled, which they could not expect if they did not vote against him, therefore they hoped he would excuse them: That as he knew the Evil of this illegal Influence by Experience, therefore he should always be against any Measure, that might tend to encrease it, as this Scheme most evidently would: That he hop'd he should always disdain to owe the Honour of representing his Country in Parliament to any Administration whatever: That he hop'd he should always depend upon the free Votes of his Fellow-Subjects; and for that Reason he must be against what he thought would destroy that Freedom, upon which only he was resolv'd always to depend.'

Lord Glenorchy.
Lord Morpeth.
Mr Clayton.

Mr Pulteney.

Then Lord Glenorchy spoke for agreeing with the Committee; Lord Morpeth against it; Mr Clayton for it. Then Mr Pulteney spoke as follows:

Sir,

'I must say, that the recommending the Care of the publick Revenue to this House, the recommending to us a Scheme which may, any Way, tend to the increasing of it, are Doctrines, which come very properly from the honourable Gentleman that spoke last, who for several Years has had the fingering of the publick Money, as he himself was pleased to express it: But I hope those Gentlemen will consider, that they and their Posterity are not all to enjoy the same Posts they enjoy at present; they may perhaps expect that they themselves are all in for Life, but they cannot imagine that those Posts are to go by Way of Inheritance to their Heirs; and therefore I hope, that for the sake at least of their Posterity, they will consider a little the Power and Influence that this Scheme will give to the Crown; and such a Consideration must certainly be of some Weight in the present Debate, even with those Gentlemen.

'It is certain, that the Liberties of this Country depend upon the Freedom of our Elections for Members of Parliament; our Parliaments, especially the Representatives of the People in Parliament assembled, are designed for, and generally have been a Check upon those, who were employed in the executive Part of our Government: But if it shall ever come to be in the Power of the Crown, that is to say, of those employed in the executive Part of our Government, to have such an Influence over most of the Elections in the Kingdom, as to get any Person chosen they please to recommend, they will then always have a Majority of their

their own Creatures in every House of Commons, and from such Representatives what can the People expect? Can it be expected, that such a House of Commons will ever be any Check upon those in Power, or that they will find Fault with the Conduct of the most rapacious, the most tyrannical Ministers, that may hereafter be employed by the Crown.

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‘ It is well known, that every one of the publick Offices have already so many Boroughs or Corporations, which they look on as their Properties; there are some Boroughs which may be called Treasury-Boroughs; there are others which may be called Admiralty-Boroughs; in short, it may be said, that almost the whole Towns upon the Sea-Coast are already seiz’d on, and in a Manner taken Prisoners by the Officers of the Crown: In most of them they have so great an Influence, that none can be chosen Members of Parliament but such as they are pleased to recommend. But as the Customs are confined to our Sea-Ports, as they cannot travel far from the Coast, therefore this Scheme seems to be contrived in order to extend the Laws of Excise, and thereby to extend the Influence of the Crown over all the Inland Towns and Corporations in England.

‘ This seems plainly to me to be the chief Design of the Scheme now under our Consideration; and if it succeeds, which God forbid it should, our future Ministers of State will be very much obliged to the Gentleman who projected it; the Election of a House of Commons will in all Time to come be an easy Task; for whoever shall be Prime Minister under any of our future Kings may sit at home in his great Chair, and issue forth his Orders to most of the Counties and Boroughs in Great Britain, to chuse such Persons for their Representatives in Parliament, as he shall please to think most proper for his Purpose. Most of the chief Clerks of the Treasury, and other great Offices, are already Members of this House; they deserve it, they are Gentlemen, and Men of Figure and Fortune in their Country: But if this Scheme takes Place, we may in a little Time see all the little Under-Clerks of the Treasury, and other Offices, Members of this House; we may see them trudging down to this House in the Morning, in order to give their Votes for imposing Taxes upon their Fellow-Subjects; and in the Afternoon attending behind the Chair of a Chancellor of the Exchequer, a Secretary of State, or other chief Minister: Nay, I do not know but some of us may live to see some vain over-grown Minister of State driving along the Streets, with six Members of Parliament behind his Coach.

‘ These must be the fatal Consequences of the Scheme now under our Consideration; and therefore I must think that every Man, who has a Regard to the Constitution of his Country,

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Country, or to the Liberties and Properties of those that have put their Trust in him, is in Duty bound to give his Negative to the present Question.

Gentlemen may indulge themselves in the vain Conceit, that by this Scheme all Manner of Frauds in the Tobacco-Trade will be prevented for the future, but the Thing is in its own Nature impossible ; when the Duties are so high, where they amount to five or six Times the Prime Cost of the Commodity on which they are laid, it will be impossible to prevent all Manner of Frauds ; and therefore the Increase of the publick Revenue by this Scheme, is so far from being certain, that it is altogether precarious ; and unless the publick Revenue be thereby greatly increased, the Landholders can expect no Relief : But granting that the Benefits expected by this Scheme were certain ; it is as certain, it is as demonstrable, that our Constitution will be thereby destroyed ; and are we to make a Sacrifice of our Constitution, for the poor Consideration of adding 4 or 500,000 l. a Year to the publick Revenue ? That Increase may soon be dissipated by an Administration under no Fears of being called to an Account by Parliament ; and then they will be obliged to come upon the Landholders for Money, to answer the necessary Services of the Publick. There never was in any Country a Scheme set up for introducing arbitrary Power, but what was supported by some specious Pretences : The preventing of Mobs, Insurrections, Invasions, Frauds, or the like, have in all Countries been made the Pretences for introducing arbitrary Power : But in such an Assembly as this, where the Principles of Liberty so much prevail, where there are so many Gentlemen of good Sense and Penetration, I hope no such Pretence will ever be of any Weight. To me it appears indisputable, that this Scheme is absolutely inconsistent with a free Election of Members of Parliament, and of Consequence it must be inconsistent with our Constitution ; therefore though the Advantages to be reaped from it were much greater, and much more certain than they are, I should be most heartily against it, and for that Reason I must give my Negative to the present Question.

Sir R. Walpole.
Mr Pulteney.

Mr Wal. Plumer
declares that
he oppos'd the
Excise upon Coffee,
Tea and Chocolate,
Ams 10. Geo. I.

After some few Altercations between Sir Robert Walpole and Mr Pulteney, Mr Walter Plumer stood up, and took Notice of some Gentleman's having said, ' That no Body had opposed the subjecting of Coffee, Tea, and Chocolate, to the Laws of Excise, but the Gentleman under the Gallery [*Meaning Sir John Barnard*] And he thereupon added, ' That he must put those Gentlemen in Mind, that he had then the Honour to be a Member of the House ; That he thank'd God, he did oppose that Excise-Scheme as well as this ; and that he would oppose every such Scheme that

that should ever be offered to the House, while he had the Honour of sitting in it : That he knew how grievous and oppressive the Laws of Excise were to his Fellow-Subjects ; and therefore he could not answer it to his Country, if he did not, to the utmost of his Power, oppose every Scheme offered for the Extension of those vexatious and arbitrary Laws.'

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After this the Question was put upon the first Resolution, and carried in the Affirmative by 249 against 189. Then the Questions were severally put upon the second and third Resolutions, which were agreed to without any Division ; and the fourth Resolution being read a second Time, Sir Robert Walpole inform'd the House, ' That the King had commanded him to acquaint the House, that his Majesty gave his Consent, that the House should do as they should think fit, in relation to the said Fines, Penalties, Forfeitures, and Seizures. Hereupon the Question was put, and this last Resolution likewise was agreed to without any Division.

The Resolutions of the Committee, relating to the Excise on Tobacco, agreed to by the House.

Then it was ordered that a Bill should be brought in, pursuant to the said Resolutions; and that Sir Charles Turner, Sir Robert Walpole, Sir Philip Yorke, Mr Talbot, Mr Dodgington, Mr Clayton, Sir William Yonge, Sir George Oxenden, Mr Scrope, and Mr Edward Walpole should prepare and bring in the same.

And a Bill order'd accordingly.

April 2. The House, in a Grand Committee, consider'd farther of the Land-Tax Bill, for the Service of the Year 1733, and a Motion was made, That it should be an Instruction to the said Committee, that they should be empowered to receive a Clause to enable and direct the several Commissioners, to be appointed in the said Bill for putting the same in Execution, to nominate and appoint a Receiver or Receivers General for each County, Riding, City, Borough, Cinque-Port, Town or Place respectively, within England, Wales, and Berwick, for which they were appointed Commissioners ; and to make the said respective Counties, Ridings, Cities, Boroughs, Cinque-Ports, Towns or Places, for which they were appointed Commissioners, answerable for any Deficiency that might happen by such Receiver or Receivers.' It was urged, in Favour of this Motion, ' That the Commissioners in each County, were much better Judges of the Persons proper to be appointed Receivers in the several Counties, &c. than the Gentlemen employed in the Administration : That they were also better Judges of the Persons offered as Sureties for such Receivers : And that it would be a great Advantage to the Publick, which had often suffer'd by the Insolvency of such Receivers, and the Insufficiency of the Security that had been given for them. However, the Courtiers

Motion for empowering the Commissioners of the Land-Tax to appoint the Receivers thereof.

Debate thereon.

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1733.

The Bill for excising Tobacco read the first Time, and after Debate order'd to be read a second Time.

tiers opposed this Motion very strenuously ; and the Question being put, it passed in the Negative.

April 4. The Excise-Bill was brought in, and read a first Time ; after which Sir Robert Walpole, by his Majesty's Command, acquainted the House, That his Majesty consented to their making such Alterations as they should think fit for the publick Service, in relation to the Subsidy on Tobacco then payable on account of his Majesty's Civil List. Hereupon it was objected, That some Parts of the said Bill were not within the Resolutions of the House, pursuant to which the said Bill had been ordered to be brought in ; and therefore it was moved, That the Bill should be withdrawn : But this passed in the Negative, by 232 Votes against 176 : Then a Motion was made for adjourning, which likewise passed in the Negative : But at last it was resolved, That the Bill should be read a second Time on the 11th Instant, by 236 against 200.

Motion for Printing it.

April 5. A Motion was made for Printing such a Number of Copies of the said Bill, as should be sufficient for the Use of the Members of the House : But upon the Question's being put, it was carried in the Negative by 128 against 112

The City of London petition against the said Bill.

April 10. The Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common-Council of the City of London, presented a Petition against the Excise-Bill, setting forth, ' That the Petitioners, on occasion of the Bill depending in this House, for repealing several Subsidies and an Impost now payable on Tobacco of the British Plantations, and granting an Inland Duty in lieu thereof, presume in all Humility to express to this House, as they have already done in some Measure by their Representation to their Members, the universal Sense of the City of London concerning any farther Extension of the Laws of Excise : That the Burthen of Taxes already imposed on every Branch of Trade, however chearfully born, is severely felt ; but the Petitioners apprehend, that this Burthen will grow too heavy to be born, if it be increased by such vexatious and oppressive Methods of levying and collecting the Duties, as they are assured by melancholy Experience, that the Nature of all Excises must necessarily produce : That the Merchants, Tradesmen, and Manufacturers of this Kingdom, have supported themselves under the Pressure of the Excise-Laws now in Force, by the comfortable and reasonable Expectation, that Laws, which nothing but publick Necessity could be a Motive to enact, would be repealed in Favour of the Trade of the Nation, and of the Liberty of the Subject, whenever that Motive should be removed ; as the Petitioners, presume it effectually is, by undisturb'd Tranquility at Home, and a general Peace so firmly establish'd Abroad : That if

this

this Expectation be entirely taken away ; if the Excise-Laws, instead of being repealed, are extended to other Species of Merchandize not yet excised ; and a Door open'd for extending them to all ; the Petitioners cannot, in Justice to themselves, to the Merchants, Tradefinen, and Manufacturers of the whole Kingdom, and to the general Interest of their Country, conceal their Apprehension, that the most fatal Blow, which was ever given, will be given on this Occasion, to the Trade and Navigation of Great Britain : That that great Spring, from which the Wealth and Prosperity of the Publick flows, will be obstructed, and the Mercantile Part of the Nation become not only less able to trade to Advantage, but unwilling to trade at all ; since no Person, who can enjoy all the Privileges of a British Subject out of Trade, even with a small Fortune, will voluntarily renounce some of the most valuable of those Privileges, by subjecting himself to the Laws of Excise : That the Petitioners are able to shew, that these their Apprehensions are founded both in Experience and in Reason ; and therefore praying, that the House will be pleased to hear them by their Counsel against the said Bill.

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This Petition being brought up and read at the Table, Sir John Barnard immediately rose up, and shewed how much the City and Citizens of London, as well as all the other trading Part of the Nation, would be affected by the Bill for altering the Method of raising the Duties payable upon Tobacco, and how just Reasons they had to insist upon being heard by their Counsel against it ; and concluded with a Motion for granting them Leave to be heard by their Counsel, if they thought fit. In Opposition to this Motion, Sir Robert Walpole, Mr Horatio Walpole, Mr Winnington, Mr Talbot, Sir Philip Yorke, Sir William Yonge, and Mr Henry Pelham, insisted, ' That it had always been the Practice of the House, never to receive any Petitions, and much less to admit Counsel to be heard, against any Bill for imposing Taxes upon the Subject ; for that if any such Thing were to be admitted, it would be impossible ever to pass any such Bill, because there would be so many different Petitions presented against it, by those who were to be subject thereto, that it would be impossible to hear Counsel separately upon every such Petition, within the usual Time of the Continuance of one Session of Parliament : And that in refusing to admit Counsel to be heard, there could be no Inconvenience, because every Man, and every Body of Men, had their Representatives in that House, who certainly would represent their Case to the House, if any particular Hardship was to be put upon them by any Bill then before the House.' In Answer to this, Mr Sandys, Mr Gibbon, Mr

Sir John Barnard moves for allowing Counsel to the City of London, in Favour of their Petition.

Debate thereon.

Sir R. Walpole,
Mr H. Walpole,
Mr Winnington,
Mr Talbot,
Sir Philip Yorke,
Sir William Yonge,
Mr Henry Pelham,

Mr Sandys,
Mr Gibbon,

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Mr Bootle,
Mr Pulteney,
Sir W. Wyndham,
Mr Walt. Plumer,
Mr Heathcote,
Mr Wyndham.

Bootle, Mr Pulteney, Sir William Wyndham, Mr Walter Plumer, Mr Heathcote, and Mr Wyndham replied, ' That the House had never pretended to any general Custom of refusing Petitions, except against those Bills which were called Money-Bills, that was to say, such Bills as were brought in for raising Money for the current Service of the Year ; and that even as to them there were many Precedents, where the House had admitted the Parties, whom they thought to have a real Interest therein, to be heard by their Counsel against the passing of such Bills : That the admitting of Counsel even in such Cases could never prevent the passing of such Bills, because the House could always order all Parties petitioning to be heard at one Time ; and could give such Directions, that it would never take up many Days to hear every Thing, that could be objected by every one of the Parties petitioning : That tho' every Part of the Nation had their Representatives in that House, yet it was well known, that speaking in Publick was a Talent that every Man was not endowed with, [See Vol. I. p. 244.] from whence it might happen, that the particular Persons, or Part of the Nation, to be aggrieved by what was passing in the House, might not have any such Members as were proper to lay their Case fully and clearly before the House ; and that therefore, even as to Money-Bills, it was proper to admit Parties to be heard against them, when it appeared that they were very particularly interested therein : And that as to the Case then before them, there was not the least Pretence for refusing the Desire of the Petition, because the Bill, against which it was presented, was no Money-Bill ; for it was granted by the Advocates for the Bill ; it was even insisted on as the greatest Argument for it, that there were no new Duties to be imposed ; that it was a Bill only for altering the Method of collecting the Taxes already imposed ; and therefore it could never be pretended, that there was any Practice or Custom of the House for refusing to admit Parties interested to be heard against such a Bill : That if there had been such a Custom introduced, it ought not to be observed, especially when such a considerable Body, as the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council of the City of London, come with an humble Petition to be heard against a Bill, which they thought would not only be highly injurious to them in particular, but destructive of the Trade and Commerce of the whole Nation.'

In this Debate there were many Precedents brought by Mr Sandys, Mr Gibbon, and Mr Bootle, where the House had receiv'd Petitions, and admitted Counsel to be heard against Money-Bills : There were likewise Precedents brought by Sir William Yonge, and Mr Winnington, where

where the same had been refused. Then the Question being put, for allowing the Petitioners to be heard by their Counsel against the Bill, it was carried in the Negative, by 214 against 197. After which it was ordered that the said Petition should lie upon the Table, until the said Bill should be read a second Time.

April 11. A Petition of the Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council of the Town of Nottingham, against the Excise-Bill, was presented to the House and read, which was also ordered to lie upon the Table: After this a Petition of the City of Coventry was presented to the House and read, which was likewise order'd to lie on the Table.

Then the Order of the Day being read for the second Reading of the said Bill, the Serjeant at Arms was order'd to go into the Court of Requests and the other usual Places, and summon the Members there to attend the Service of the House; and he being returned, instead of reading the Bill a second Time, a Motion was made by Sir Robert Walpole, that the said Bill should be read a second Time upon the 12th of June: Tho', by this Motion, it evidently appeared that the Bill was design'd to be dropt; yet some Members, who had from the Beginning appeared strenuously against it, were for having it rejected: But this Proposition did not come to a Question, so that the first Motion was agreed to without Opposition.

April 12. Complaint was made to the House by several Members, who had voted in Favour of the Excise-Bill, that a tumultuous Crowd of People had been assembled together the Night before, and several Days during the Session, in the Court of Requests, and other Avenues to the House; and that they themselves and several other Members of the House had been, in their Return from the House, menaced, insulted, and assaulted, by a tumultuous Crowd of People in most of the Passages to the House: Hereupon it was resolved *Nem. Con.* I. That the assaulting, insulting, or menacing any Member of the House, in coming to or going from the House, or upon the account of his Behaviour in Parliament, was a high Infringement of the Privilege of the House; a most outrageous and dangerous Violation of the Rights of Parliament; and a high Crime and Misdemeanor. II. That the assembling and coming of any Number of Persons in a riotous, tumultuous, and disorderly Manner to the House, in order either to hinder or promote the passing of any Bill, or other Matter depending before the House, was a high Infringement of the Privilege of the House; destructive of the Freedom and Constitution of Parliament; and a high Crime and Misdemeanor. III. That the inciting and encouraging any Number of Persons to

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1733.

The Motion for allowing Counsel to the City of London, on the Behalf of their Petition against the Excise-Bill, passes in the Negative; and the same is ordered to lie on the Table; as are likewise Petitions from Nottingham and Coventry.

Sir Robert Walpole moves for putting off, for two Months, the second Reading of the Bill for excising Tobacco; which after some Debate, is agreed to.

Complaint made to the House by several Members, who had voted for the Excise-Bill, of their being insulted by the Populace.

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1733.

come in a riotous, tumultuous, and disorderly Manner to the House, in order either to hinder or promote the passing of any Bill or other Matter depending before the House, was a high Infringement of the Privilege of the House; destructive of the Freedom and Constitution of Parliament; and a high Crime and Misdemeanor.

Several Orders
made thereupon.

Then it was ordered, I. That the Members for the City of London, should signify the said Resolutions to the Lord Mayor. II. That the Members for the County of Middlesex, should signify the said Resolutions to the Sheriff of Middlesex. III. That the Members for Westminster, should signify the said Resolutions to the High Bailiff of Westminster.

The Scheme for
subjecting the
Wine-Trade to the
Laws of Excise, be-
ing put off likewise
for two Months, is
intirely drop'd.

April 13. This being the Day appointed for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to consider farther of the most proper Methods for the better Security and Improvement of the Duties and Revenues, then charged on and made payable from Tobacco and Wines, a Motion was made, for the House to resolve itself into the said Committee, on the 14th of June; and the Question being put on the said Motion, it was resolv'd in the Affirmative, by 118 against 76. By this Resolution, that Part of the Excise-Scheme, which related to the Duties on Wines, was entirely laid aside.

The House resolve,
That a Committee
of 21 Members be
appointed to inquire
into the Frauds of
the Customs.

April 19. Upon the Motion of Mr Perry, the House resolv'd, *Nem. Con.* That a Committee be appointed to inquire into the Frauds and Abuses in the Customs: Then it was farther resolv'd, That the Number of the said Committee be Twenty-one, to be chosen by Balloting.

A Petition from the
Dealers in Coffee,
Tea, and Chocolate,
and that the Excise-
Laws, relating to
these Commodities.

April 20. A Petition of the Druggists, Grocers, and others dealing in Coffee, Tea, and Chocolate, was presented to the House, and read; setting forth, 'That by an Act of the 10th Year of King George I. intituled, *An Act for repealing the Duties therein mentioned, payable upon Coffee, &c. imported, and for granting certain Inland Duties in lieu thereof, &c.* the Petitioners were made to hope, that the Duties arising from the said Commodities would be better secured, and the Interest of the fair Trader better supported: But that the Petitioners had found themselves, from fatal Experience, subjected to Laws most oppressive and injurious to Trade; were deprived of the Privilege of Juries; subjected to the judicial Determination of Commissioners, and to the Inquisition and Inspection of Persons unknown to them, who entered their Houses at Pleasure, and to whom they were made accountable for all their Dealings; and after having paid Duty for their Goods, had not Liberty to sell the same without Permits from the Officers of Excise, expressing the Names and Places of Abode of the Buyers and Sellers; to the great Damage of the Petitioners, and the exposing the

the Extent and Circumstances of their Trade to the said Officers, and to whomsoever they thought fit to communicate the same; were subject to severe Forfeitures for Errors or Neglect of Entries in their Books, which were absolutely unavoidable; and were moreover, by a Clause in an Act of the 11th of King George I. liable to be examined upon Oath touching the Entries in their Books, and in Case of Neglect or Refusal were subject to heavy Fines: That by these Grievances the Petitioners, as they conceived, were in a worse Condition than any of his Majesty's Subjects; and that the clandestine Importation of Tea was never at a greater Height than at the present Time, to the Prejudice of the Revenue, and the Ruin of the fair Traders, who only were subject to those oppressive Laws; therefore praying that the House would give them such Relief, as to their great Wisdom should seem meet.' Then a Motion being made, and the Question put, That the Petition be referred to a Committee of the whole House; it passed in the Negative, by 250 against 150.

Anno 6 Geo. 1.
1733.

A Motion being made that the said Petition be referred to a Committee of the whole House, it passes in the Negative.

April 25. The Lord Vere Beauclerk reported the Names of the Committee, appointed to inquire into the Frauds and Abuses in the Customs, viz. Sir John Cope, Bart. Mr Clutterbuck, Sir William Clayton, Bart. Mr Stephen Fox, Mr Edgcombe, Hon. Mr Henry Pelham, Sir John Heathcote, Bart. Sir Philip Yorke, Mr Clayton, Hon. Mr Anthony Lowther, Sir George Oxenden, Bart. Mr Talbot, Gen. Wade, Mr Campbell of Pembroke-shire, Mr Duncan Forbes, Sir Tho. Frankland, Bart. Mr Winnington, Lord Hervey, Mr Doddington, Mr Horatio Walpole, and Sir William Yonge, Bart. every one of whom had voted for the Excise-Scheme: But there having been two principal Lists prepar'd on this Occasion, the Reader will find the Names of those Members who were propos'd on the contrary Side, with the Number of Votes for each List, in the *APPENDIX*.

Names of the Committee appointed to inquire into the Frauds of the Customs.

April 27. A Motion was made, That the Directors of the South-Sea Company should lay before the House, an Account of what Sums of Money, South-Sea Stock, and South-Sea Annuities had been received from the Trustees, for raising Money on the Estates of the late Directors of the South-Sea Company and others; distinguishing the Time of such Receipts, and the Application thereof, with all the Orders and Directions of the General Courts of the said Company, relating to the Disposition thereof. But the Question being put, it pass'd in the Negative.

Motion for an Account of the Money rais'd on the Estates of the South Sea Directors, Anno 1720.

April 30. An engross'd Bill, *To prevent the infamous Practice of Stockjobbing*, was read the third Time, and a Motion being made, That the Bill do pass; the same was oppos'd

Debate concerning a Bill, To prevent the infamous Practice of Stockjobbing.

Anno 6. Geo. II.

1733.

Mr Glanville.

pos'd by Mr Glanville, who stood up, and spoke as follows :

Mr Speaker,

‘ There is, in my Opinion, a very great Hardship to be put, by the Bill now before us, upon the Proprietors of the Publick Funds. As the Law now stands, a Gentleman may sell his Estate, a Merchant or Tradesman may sell his Goods, every Man may dispose of his Property by a Bargain for Time, or in whatever Manner he pleases : But by this Bill the Creditors of the Publick, those who have put their Trust in the Publick Faith, are to be laid under a particular Restraint ; a Restraint which they were no way subject to when they lent their Money to the Publick ; and from henceforth they must not dispose of their Property, but in the particular Manner by this Bill prescribed !

‘ I am, Sir, as great an Enemy to Stockjobbing as any Gentleman in this House, and for preventing that pernicious Practice I shall be glad to join in any Measures, which are not destructive to Publick Credit, and injurious to private Persons, with respect to the free Use of their Property : But, as I think the Measures proposed by this Bill will certainly be destructive of the one, and injurious to the other, therefore I cannot let it pass, without taking the Liberty of offering my Objections against it.

‘ It is in all Cases a great Hardship put upon People, to subject them to Penalties, which may often by meer Ignorance be incurred : But in this Case, the Hardship is the greater, because there are many Proprietors of the Publick Funds, particularly Women, who cannot be presumed to be Readers of Acts of Parliament : They put an entire Confidence in their Brokers, and, if the Broker happens to neglect some of the Forms prescribed, the most innocent Persons may be brought under great Penalties. Nay, I may say, that if this Bill passes into a Law, it will always be in the Power of two or three Brokers, to subject those that employ them to the severe Penalties to be enacted by this Bill ; for if two Brokers should combine together, and enter in their Books a Bargain for Time, as made between two of their Correspondents, they might easily get a third Person to combine with them, and to inform against the presumed Buyer and Seller ; the Brokers Books sworn to by the Brokers, whom they usually employed, would be a strong Proof against them ; and thus two innocent Men might be brought to suffer severely for an Agreement, which had never entered into either of their Heads.

‘ It often happens, Sir, that a Gentleman, who foresees that he shall have Use for his Money in three or four Months Time, is well satisfied with the Price his Stock then bears ;

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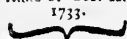
he cannot then sell out his Stock for ready Money, because he does not know what to do with his Money in the mean Time : But as the Law now stands, he may take Advantage of the then current Price of Stock, he may sell it out at that Price, or perhaps at an advanced Price, to be delivered only when he knows he shall have Occasion for the Money ; this he acquaints his Broker of, and the Broker may probably find him out a Man who likes the then current Price, and expects Money to be thrown into his Hands in three or four Months, which he resolves to employ in that Fund : In this Case the Buying and Selling for Time is convenient for both, and it is not to be questioned, but that many are encouraged to become Purchasers of Stock upon this very Account ; therefore the forbidding of any such Agreement for the future, will not only prove to be an Inconvenience to many, who are now possessed of Stock, but will prevent some People becoming Purchasers, which, of Consequence, will do Harm to the Publick Credit of the Nation.

‘ It is well known, Sir, that the chief Support of the Credit of our Publick Funds is owing to the ready Access People have, at all Times, to the Money they have there lodged : But this ready Access will, by this Bill, be made very precarious to all those, who shall hereafter be obliged to sell at once all the Property they have in any particular Fund : For, if the Purchaser should fail to comply with his Agreement, the Seller cannot, upon the Transfer-Day, compound the Difference with him, and sell out his Stock to another, in order to raise the Money he has immediate Use for : No, he must sue the Man he sells to, and for that End he must make a Transfer of his Stock, which Transfer must stand upon the Books during the whole Continuance of the Suit ; he cannot in the mean Time sell his Stock to another, for if he did so, he would not be able to shew at the Tryal, that he had made a specifical Performance on his Part, and consequently he would certainly be nonsuited, and obliged to pay Costs. This, Sir, will be a most intolerable Grievance upon all the Proprietors of our Publick Funds, and will make many of them resolve to turn their Money to some other Use.

‘ I must be of Opinion, that the making a Law to prevent Men’s coming to an amicable Composition of any Difference that may be between them, seems to me something extraordinary. This will be such a Discouragement, that no Man, I believe, will chuse to become a Purchaser of any of our Funds, when he knows that he cannot afterwards sell out his Stock, without exposing himself to the Danger of being involved in a Law-Suit, to which he is by Law expressly prohibited to put any End by an amicable Agreement.

Anno 6. Geo. II.

1733.



ment : And if a Purchaser should, by any Disappointment, be disabled to comply with the Purchase he had made, but was willing to pay down, in ready Money, the Difference, which might not, perhaps, amount to five Pounds, it would be very hard to oblige him to stand out a Law-Suit to the very last, which would cost him, at least, treble that Money.

‘ That Clause, Sir, of obliging a Man to answer upon Oath, in a Case where great Penalties may be incurred, seems likewise to me to be a very new and a very extraordinary Sort of Clause ; for it is no way consonant to the Spirit of our Laws, to oblige any Man to accuse himself : And as it lays a Foundation for every Person, that is inclin’d to be malicious, to bring a Bill in Chancery against any Man, who is or ever was possessed of any of the Publick Funds ; it will consequently be a great Discouragement to any Man’s becoming a Purchaser, or continuing to be a Proprietor of those Funds, and will of course tend to the Destruction of all Publick Credit.

‘ Another Hardship I shall take Notice of, is, Sir, that if this Bill passes, no Man for the future can employ a Merchant to buy or sell Stock for him ; for if a Merchant should be employed, and should charge Commission for his Trouble, he would incur some of the Penalties of this Bill ; unless he kept a regular Book, and fairly entered therein all such Transactions, in the same Manner as Brokers are by this Bill obliged to do.

‘ All these, Sir, are Hardships, which I think the Creditors of the Publick ought not to be subjected to, and therefore I cannot give my Consent to the passing of this Bill. I would sooner have taken Notice of these Things, but there happened to be such a Noise and Disturbance in the House, both upon the second Reading of this Bill, and likewise when it was in the Committee, that I could not expect to be heard ; and therefore I did not then rise up to say any thing against it.’

Mr Bowles.

Sir G. Caswall.

Mr Glanville was seconded by Mr Bowles ; and back’d by Sir George Caswall, as follows,

Mr Speaker,

‘ It is evident, that this Bill will be extremely inconvenient to all the Proprietors or Dealers in any of our Publick Securities : The Words of it are so general, that I do not know but that even Navy-Bills, and Contracts for furnishing the Navy with Provisions, will be comprehended ; and if they are, the usual way of Dealing in such Affairs will be entirely prevented, which may be of dangerous Consequence to the Nation ; for it is well known, that those who contract for furnishing the Navy with Provisions, seldom or never have

have as much Money of their own, as is sufficient for making good the Contracts they enter into. It is usual for a Man who has not perhaps 10,000 l. of his own, to contract for furnishing the Navy with 40,000 l. worth of Provisions; and in such Cases the Method always hitherto observed is, for the Contractor, as soon as he has made such Contract, to go to some monied Man, who furnishes him with what Money he stands in need of, upon his becoming bound for the Money advanced with Interest from the Date; and obliging himself to deliver Navy-Bills, at the Price then agreed on, equal to the Principal Money then advanced, and the Interest that shall in the mean time grow due.

‘ These Bills, Sir, I look on as Publick Securities, because they are generally every Year provided for by Parliament; and therefore I take them to be within the general Words of this Bill; and as all such Bills vary a great deal in their Price, inasmuch, Sir, that I have known them at 45 l. *per Cent.* Discount, it will for the future be impossible for those, who contract for furnishing the Navy with Provisions, to enter into any such Agreement with any monied Man whatever; consequently no Man can hereafter contract for furnishing the Navy, with more Provisions than he can purchase with his own Money, which will of course make the providing for the Navy much more difficult than heretofore. This, Sir, is one very great Inconvenience which must arise from this Bill; but there are so many others, that, in my Opinion, the Title of the Bill ought to be altered, and instead of calling it a Bill for preventing the scandalous Practice of Stock-jobbing, it ought to be called a Bill for the destroying of Publick Credit.’

Hereupon Sir John Barnard stood up in Favour of the Bill, and said, Sir John Barnard.

Mr Speaker,

‘ I did not offer, Sir, to rise up sooner, because as we are now upon the third Reading of this Bill, against which there were few or no Objections made in any Part of its Progress through this House, I was willing to hear all the Objections that were to be made against it, before I rose up to answer; that I might thereby give you as little Trouble as possible. I am, indeed, surprized to hear any Gentleman say, that there was upon any Occasion such a Noise in the House that he could not be heard: It is true, when a Bill is passing, which is thought to be a Bill of course, there are but few Gentlemen give great Attention to it; and upon such Occasions, when Gentlemen are not otherwise employed, they will fall a talking with one another, which must of course occasion some little Noise in the House: But every Gentleman knows, that upon any such Occasion, whoever inclines to

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speaks

speak to the Bill in Hand, may rise up and call to the Chair. It is then the Duty of the Chair to order Silence, and then the House will become attentive to the Gentleman who is to speak. This is the Method of proceeding in this House ; and this, Sir, you have always taken a proper Care to see punctually observed.

‘ I wish, Sir, with all my Heart, that the Gentlemen had made their Objections to this Bill, when it was before the Committee ; for then it might have been made to their own Liking, if it be possible to make any such Bill to their Liking. When any Bill is brought into this House, it is usual for all Gentlemen, who have a mind that some Bill of that Nature should pass, to make their Objections to the Parts of it they find Fault with, either upon the second Reading, or upon its being committed ; because, that if their Objections be well founded, such Amendments may be then made to the Bill, as may obviate all Objections that can be reasonably made against it : But when Gentlemen have no mind that any Bill of that Nature should pass, it is well known that they reserve all their Objections to the very last, in order to throw out the Bill upon its third Reading. For this Reason I must, Sir, have some Suspicion, that those Gentlemen, who now begin to make their Objections against the Bill we have at present before us, have no mind that any such Bill should pass, as would effectually put an End to the Practice of Stock-jobbing.

‘ I find, Sir, it is granted upon all Hands, that the Practice of Stockjobbing is pernicious to the Trade, and to the People of this Nation : This then is an Evil that ought to be remedied, if possible ; and by the Bill now before us, we are, at least we propose, to remedy this Evil. Now, Sir, in all such Cases, it is certain that no Remedy can be proposed, but what will be attended with some Inconveniencies, and therefore we are to consider on which Side the Balance lies ; whether the Inconveniencies, design'd to be remedied by the Law proposed, are more considerable than the Inconveniencies that may be occasioned thereby ; or if the last be more considerable than the first ? If we judge that the first are the most considerable, we are surely to pass the Bill, notwithstanding those Inconveniencies that may be occasioned thereby : If we judge that the last are the most considerable, we are to throw out the Bill ; and rather continue under the former Evil than subject ourselves to a greater. This, Sir, is certainly the proper Rule to judge by in the present Case, and therefore by this Rule let the Bill now before us be tried.

‘ The many bad Consequences of Stockjobbing are, I believe, well known ; and that it is high time to put an End to that infamous Practice, is, what I hope, most Gentlemen

in this House are convinced of. It is a Lottery, or rather a Gaming-House, publicly set up in the Middle of the City of London, by which the Heads of our Merchants and Tradesmen are turned from getting a Livelihood or an Estate, by the honest Means of Industry and Frugality ; and are enticed to become Gamesters by the Hopes of getting an Estate at once. It is, Sir, not only a Lottery, but a Lottery of the very worst Sort ; because it is always in the Power of the principal Managers to bestow the Benefit-Tickets as they have a mind. It is but lately since, by the Arts and Practices of Stockjobbing, the East-India Stock was run up to 200*l.* *per Cent.* and in a little Time after it tumbled down again below 150*l.* several Millions were lost and won by this single Job, and many poor Men were undone ; so bare-fac'd were some Men, at that Time, in the infamous Practice of Stockjobbing, that, after that Stock began to fall, they sold it cheaper for Time than for ready Money ; which no Man would have done, unless he had been made acquainted with the Secret which came afterwards to be unfolded, but was then known to a very few.

‘ We know, Sir, how apt Mankind are in their own Nature to become Gamesters ; but to this Game of Stockjobbing, our Merchants, Tradesmen, and Shop-keepers are prompted not only by their own Inclinations, but also by some of their Acquaintance, who have taken up the Trade of being Brokers in Exchange-Alley. It is natural for Men to endeavour to make the most of the Business they pursue ; and where there are such a Number of Brokers, we may believe that some of them do endeavour to persuade all those of their Acquaintance to become Stockjobbers. The Broker comes perhaps to the Merchant, and talks to him of the many Fatigues and Dangers, the great Trouble and the small Profits, that are in the way of Trade ; and after having done all he can to put the Man out of Conceit with his own Business, which is often too easily effected, he then tells him, that if he will allow him to dig for him in the rich Mine of Exchange-Alley, he may get more for him in a Day than he could get by his Trade in a Twelvemonth. Thus the Merchant is persuaded ; he engages, he goes on for some Time, but never knows what he is doing till he is quite undone ; his just Creditors are surprized ; what, say they, this Man had a good Stock to begin with, he has had a good Trade for several Years, he never lived extravagantly, what is become of his Effects and Money ? They inquire, they search into his Affairs, and at last perhaps they find out, that the whole was gam'd away by his Broker in Exchange-Alley.

‘ This,

Anno 5. Geo. II.

1733.

‘ This, Sir, may, for what I know, increase Publick Credit for a Time ; but I am sure it is a great Discouragement to Trade, which is the chief, the only solid Support of Publick Credit, and it is the Ruin of all private Credit ; it destroys that mutual Faith among Merchants, by which only our Trade can be made to prosper and flourish. This, Sir, is a domestick Evil, an Evil which, tho’ fatal in its Consequences, yet does not perhaps immediately draw any Money out of the Nation ; but there is a foreign Evil attending the Game of Stockjobbing, by which the Nation may be plundered of great Sums of Money at once. It is, by the means of Stockjobbing, always in the Power of every foreign Court, to raise Contributions upon this Nation whenever they please ; They have no more to do but to send over, and order a great deal of Stock to be sold out at the current Price for Time, then raise an Alarm of the Pretender, or some such Alarm, by which they may make all our Publick Funds fall perhaps 20 l. *per Cent.* and so purchase Stock 20 l. *per Cent.* cheaper than they sold ; in order to perform their Part of the Contracts they had before made for Time. Thus, Sir, they may make a Harvest of the Fall of our Publick Funds ; and as they know best when the Alarm will blow over, they may make a new Harvest of their Rise.

‘ These, Sir, are but a few of the many Inconveniences that arise by Stockjobbing. Give me leave now to examine those Inconveniences which, ’tis pretended, will be occasioned by the passing of this Bill into a Law. As to the real and honest Creditors of the Publick, I have as great a Regard for that Faith, which ought to be preserved towards them, as any Gentleman whatever : I shall never be for doing any Thing that may lessen their Security, as to the Payment either of their Principal or Interest, and I wish that every Gentleman in this House were of the same Mind : But can it be said, that the making such Regulations, as the Publick Good requires for the transferring of their Property from one to another, is any Impeachment of the Publick Faith ? The preventing of Stockjobbing is so far from being a Breach of Publick Faith, that I am sure it is what all the honest Creditors of the Publick wish and desire ; and as there is nothing in the Bill that can be a Hardship upon any fair Purchaser or Seller, it will be so far from being destructive to Publick Credit, that it will rather increase it ; because it will make the Value of every Man’s Property in the Publick Funds more certain and invariable. All those, who have no other Aim but to receive their Dividends punctually, and to have their principal Money secure, choose to be in that Fund which is subject to the fewest and least Mutations ; and this is the Reason that we always see the Annuity

nuity-Funds bear a higher Price in Proportion than any of our Trading-Stocks.

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1733.

‘ To say, that no Penalty ought to be inflicted on a Practice that is found to be inconsistent with the Publick Good, because Persons ignorant of the Law may thereby suffer, seems to me, Sir, to be a very odd Pretence. I hope Gentlemen will, in all other Cases, be as careful of inflicting Penalties upon the Subject; it is indeed what ought never to be done but in Cases of the utmost Necessity: But where the Advancement of the Publick Good, or the Security of private Property, can be come at in no other Way, it must be done; and every Man is obliged to know the Law, or to apply himself to those that do. In the present Case, no Man can by Ignorance subject himself to the Penalties proposed by this Bill, without some dishonest Intent; for I am convinced, that no Man ever did, or ever will either buy or sell Stock for Time, unless he knows more, or at least thinks he knows more, about that Stock than the Man to whom he sells, or from whom he buys; which Intention is certainly not very fair, tho’, when it is not extended too far, it may be necessary to overlook it in the Way of Commerce.

‘ This, Sir, leads me to consider the pretended Convenience of Bargains in Stock for Time. Suppose a Gentleman finds he must sell out his Stock three Months hence; suppose another expects Money in three Months Time, which he intends to lay out on the Purchase of Stock; I believe neither the one will purchase, nor the other sell ’till that Time comes, unless he knows, or thinks he knows, some Secret relating to that Stock which other People are not aware of; for if he that is to sell expects no Variation in the Value of his Property, why should he sell ’till he has Occasion for his Money? But granting that he is so much satisfied with the then current Price, that he absolutely resolves to sell at that very Time, may he not sell for ready Money, and lodge his Money in the Bank ’till he has Occasion for it, since no Man can pretend but that his Money is as secure when lodged in the Bank, as it can be in any of our Publick Funds? And as to the Buyer, I am sure no wise Man will venture to purchase Stock ’till he has the Money at Command; unless he does it in Expectation that the Stock will rise, which is downright Gaming, and what is intended by this Bill to be prevented.

‘ As to a Man’s being obliged to answer upon Oath to any Bill filed against him, it can be no Hardship; because whoever does so answer, and fairly discovers the Agreement made, is free from all Penalties; he becomes liable to nothing but to return the Money which he received; and as the Law now stands, whoever receive Money to another’s Use,

Anno 6. Geo. II.
1733.

Use, is obliged to answer upon Oath, and will be obliged to return the Money he confesses so to have received.

‘ To pretend, Sir, that by this Bill Men may be subjected to great Penalties, by the Perjury and Conspiracy of two or three Brokers, is another Objection for which there is no Foundation ; for against Perjuries and Conspiracies there can be no Guard but that of a fair Trial by an honest Jury ; by such a Tryal any such Conspiracy might probably be discovered ; it would be almost impossible for three Rogues to concert their Story so together, but that the Conspiracy would be discovered by examining them apart, and cross-questioning each, in the Manner usual at all Trials ; so that this too is nothing but an imaginary Evil, and is as strong an Objection against every penal Law, that ever was or ever can be enacted, as it is against the Bill before us.

‘ There is nothing in this Bill, Sir, that can oblige any Man to go to Law, ether as Plaintiff or Defendant, contrary to his Inclinations, or that can prevent his making up any Difference there may be between him and another ; for tho’ the Buyer of the Stock may not perhaps be able to pay for the Stock he had bought, because of some Disappointment he has in the mean Time met with, yet it is not to be presumed, that he will not be able to pay the Difference in ready Money ; and if he can pay that in ready Money at the Books, cannot he immediately sell out the Stock to another at the then current Price ; and thereby raise the rest of the Money, which he may order to be delivered to the Man who sold to him ? May not every Bargain be thus specifically performed, if the Parties are inclined so to do ? In this the only Inconvenience is, that there must be a double Transfer, which is performed with so little Trouble or Expence, that, I hope, it will be no way regarded in the present Debate : And as it may be supposed, that, if this Bill passes into a Law, there will be few or no Purchasers, but such as are able to perform it the Time they purchase ; therefore, the other Objection of the Seller’s being obliged to keep his Stock ’till the End of a tedious Law-Suit is of no Weight ; for as every Purchaser will be able, and will probably be willing to perform his Part of the Agreement, it is not to be presumed, that there will be any Law-Suits upon that Head.

‘ I am really surprized, Sir, to hear Gentlemen talk of their being, by this Bill, prevented from employing a Merchant or Friend to buy or sell Stock for them ; such Gentlemen do not, it seems, know that Commission and Brokerage are two different Articles : If a Merchant is employ’d to buy or sell Stock for another, he may either do it himself, or he may employ a Broker ; if he employs a Broker, he charges both
Brokerage

Brokerage and Commission, and if he does it himself he charges only Commission : In neither Case does he act as a Broker, nor will he be obliged to keep any Book for that Purpose.

Anno 6. Geo. II.

1733.

‘ I have now, Sir, gone through all the material Objections I have heard made against the Bill. I hope, I have shewn that there is no Weight in any of them ; I hope, I have shewn that all the Inconveniencies, which are pretended to arise from this Bill, are imaginary ; and I think, I have shewn very real Inconveniencies arising from the infamous Practice of Stockjobbing ; and every Gentleman in the House may suggest to himself a great many more. We ought to consider that no bad Custom or Practice ever crept into any Nation, but what some People got by ; and, let the Practice be as pernicious as it will, we may presume that those who get by it, will endeavour to raise Objections against every effectual Remedy that can be offered ; but as no Gentleman in this House can be any way concerned in the Gettings by Stockjobbing, so, I hope, they will not allow themselves to be misled by any frivolous Objections started, without Doors, by those who are.’

Sir John Barnard having done speaking, Mr Brooksbank stood up next, and spoke against the Bill as follows :

Mr Brooksbank,

Mr Speaker,

‘ I doubt not but there was a great deal of Money lost and won by the late sudden Rise and Fall of East-India Stock, and I am persuaded that a great many of those, who became Purchasers upon the Rise of that Stock, were such as never intended to hold the Stock for the Sake of the Dividend, but that they were such as bought only with a View of making an Advantage, by selling it out again at an advanced Price : This, 'tis true, is a Sort of Gaming, but it is of such a Sort as cannot be entirely prevented, even by the Bill now before us ; so that in such a Case no great Benefit can be expected by the Bill, and in many Cases it will certainly be attended with great Inconveniencies. I shall mention only two ; the first of which is that of the Long Annuities : It often happens that in the Sale of such Publick Securities, the Seller must deduce his Title in the same Manner, as if he were to sell a Land-Estate ; so that it will be impossible for him to compleat the Conveyance in ten Days, which is the Time limited in this Bill ; and therefore I am of Opinion, that the Sale of such Annuities will, in many Cases, become impracticable, if this Bill should pass into a Law.

‘ It is certain, Sir, that the Merchants may sell Goods to be delivered at any Time the Contractors shall agree on : I know that in the Russian Trade it is usual for the Merchants concerned in that Trade, to enter into Contracts to

Anno 6. Geo. II.

1733.

deliver Hemp at a certain Price, at a certain future Time, tho', perhaps, at the Time of making the Contract, the Hemp is not so much as purchased or contracted for in Russia: This is a Privilege which is enjoyed by all Merchants with respect to the Goods they deal in, and I can see no Reason why the Proprietors of our publick Funds should not enjoy the same Privilege.

'The other Inconvenience I shall mention, is, That of the Disappointments which some of the publick Creditors may meet with in the Sale of their Properties, which will certainly be much aggravated by this Bill: Suppose a Man enters into an Agreement for the Purchase of a Land-Estate, and covenants to pay the Price against such a Day under a great Penalty; for enabling him to perform his Agreement he sells out 10,000 l. of his Stock, to be delivered some few Days before that Day on which he is, by his Covenant, obliged to pay for his Estate: Suppose the Purchaser of the Stock does not come to accept of the Stock, or to pay the Price; as the Law now stands, the Seller of the Stock may make a Tender of his Stock at the Books, and may sell it out next Transfer-Day at the Risk of the Buyer, by which he is enabled to pay for his Estate, and he may recover from the Purchaser of his Stock, what he lost by his not accepting and paying for the Stock according to Agreement; But if this Bill passes into a Law, the Seller of Stock must, I presume, keep his Stock 'till the End of the Law-Suit between him and the Buyer, in order that he may be always ready to make a specifical Performance; by which Means, if he has no other Fund for raising ready Money, he must subject himself to the Penalty of his Covenant as to the Purchase of the Estate. As these are Inconveniencies which may often occur, I think it is hard to subject the Proprietors of the publick Funds to them; and therefore I shall be against the Bill's passing in the Form it is at present.'

Sir R. Walpole.

Sir Robert Walpole spoke next:

Mr Speaker,

'I wish the Objections now started against the passing of this Bill, had been mentioned either upon the second Reading, or in the Committee. I do really think that the Bill might have been drawn up, as to some Parts of it, with something more Perspicuity, so as to have intirely obviated the Objections now made to it: But as most of the Objections now made are founded upon Mistakes, as to the Meaning and Intention of the Bill, I am therefore of Opinion, that they ought not to be of Weight enough to prevent its passing.

'As to what the honourable Gentleman was pleased to mention about Navy-Contracts, I cannot think that they come

come any Way under the Case now before us. The Navy always contracted to pay ready Money to all those, who agree to furnish them with any Stores or Provisions; and after a Man has entered into such a Contract, he may certainly sell, or assign any Interest, or any Share of the Interest he has therein to another, notwithstanding the Bill now before us. Upon such Contracts the Money is indeed generally paid by Navy-Bills, but that cannot hinder the private Contractor to raise Money upon his Contract after what Manner he pleases; he may even oblige himself to deliver Navy-Bills at such a Price; for, before they are issued, they cannot be deemed to be Publick Securities; and if, upon delivering the Stores and Provisions, the Navy should actually pay ready Money to the private Contractor, can it be so much as pretended, that he would be then obliged to deliver Navy-Bills to the Person, from whom he had borrowed Money upon his Contract with the Navy: Would not, in such a Case, the Repayment of the Money borrowed with Interest be a full Performance of his Engagement with the Lender? Navy-Bills, indeed, after they are once issued, do certainly become Publick Securities, and then they are to be bought and sold in the Manner prescribed by this Bill, which can no way injure Publick Credit.

‘ As to the Objection against compounding, or voluntarily receiving any Difference, I cannot think, that the Laws, as to the Performance on the Seller’s Part, is any way altered by this Bill. He is not by this Bill obliged to keep the Stock sold, in his Possession, any longer than he was before; he may certainly perform upon his Part by a Tender of the Stock, in the same Manner as he could have done before; he may then sell out his Stock, and he may bring his Action against the Buyer for not performing his Part of the Contract, upon which Action he will recover the Difference by way of Damages.

‘ Indeed, that Objection relating to the long Annuities has something more in it, and therefore, I wish it had been provided against by some Words, or some Clause in the Bill; but it is a Case that will happen but seldom, and the Difficulty may be, by proper Management and Dispatch, in all Cases surmounted, and therefore I do not think it sufficient for throwing out the Bill; for the Practice of Stockjobbing has been so prejudicial to this Nation, that no trivial Objection ought to take Place against a Bill by which, I think, that Practice will be prevented for the future.

‘ I have, Sir, long wished for some such Bill: Every one knows, how even the Administration has been sometimes distressed by the Practices of Stockjobbers: They have Correspondents settled at all the Courts of Europe, and upon all

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Occasions of Moment they have their Expresses, who make much greater Dispatch than the Government's Expresses can do, because they are generally much better paid, and better appointed for that Purpose.

' I must say, Sir, that the late Practices in the East-India Stock were really something surprizing; there might perhaps be some, who upon its Rise bought only with a View of selling out again at an advanced Price; but I am persuaded there were others, who bought even at the highest Price with an honest Intention, and without any other View but that of holding the Stock they bought, and taking their Dividends as they should become due. The Price of that Stock, and of every other Stock, must always be according to the Value of Money at that Time, and the Dividend made, or that may probably be made upon the Stock: At that Time our 4l. *per Cent.* were selling at a Premium, even our 3l. *per Cent.* were selling at very near Par; and therefore we must conclude, that according to the Value of Money at that Time, an Annuity of 4l. *per Cent.* was very well worth 100l. principal Money. That Company had divided eight *per Cent.* for many Years; they but just before paid 200,000l. to the Government for a Prolongation of their Term; and at the same Time they had declared they were able to do all this, and likewise to pay off 4 or 500,000l. of their Bonds, out of the Profits of their Trade: From all which, those who were not in the deepest Secret of their Affairs, had very good Reason to conclude, that they would have been able to have continued the same Dividend for many Years to come, and that therefore 100l. East-India Stock was a cheap Purchase when bought even for 200l. The Resolution was soon after taken for diminishing their Dividend, and that was as natural a Reason for the Fall of their Stock, as their former Declarations had been for its Rise. What were the Motives for this Management I shall not pretend to determine; but I am afraid, that the Game of Stock-Jobbing is often the Cause of Managements in that, and all other publick Funds: If we destroy the Cause, the Effects must cease; and of Consequence the Price of all publick Stocks will become more certain and fixed, which will, I am sure, make them more valuable to all honest Purchasers. The fluctuating of the Price can be no Advantage to any but Brokers, and to those who have a Mind to make indirect Advantages by Stockjobbing: Those Practices will, I think, be prevented by this Bill; consequently it will tend to the Improvement of publick Credit, and therefore I shall be for its passing.'

Lord Hervey.

Then Lord Hervey spoke against the Bill:

Mr Speaker

Mr Speaker,

‘ In the Debate now before us, I cannot agree with my honourable Friend over the Way. I must be of Opinion, that if this Bill passes, no Seller can sue for any Difference upon the Stock sold, nor can he recover Damage, which I take to be the same with Difference, unless he has the Stock in his Possession the whole Time of the Suit: By this Bill every Bargain is to be specifically performed, and therefore the Seller, as I take it, must sue only for a specific Performance, which no Seller can pretend to sue for, unless he is, at all Times, during the Continuance of the Suit, in a Condition and ready to perform specifically upon his Part, for which End he must always have of that Stock which he has sold, at least as much as he is obliged to deliver to the Buyer; and therefore, if a Man has sold all the Share he has in any publick Fund, in order to enable him to perform his Part of an Agreement about something else, if the Buyer does not come to take the Stock, and pay the Price, the Seller must subject himself to the Penalty of his other Agreement, or he must give up all Pretences for recovering any thing from the Buyer of his Stock, either by way of Difference or Damages. This will be a great Hardship upon all Stockholders, and as they will, by this Bill, be subjected to a great many other Inconveniences, and to several dangerous and heavy Penalties, I shall therefore be against its passing.’

Sir William Yonge spoke next for the Bill :

Sir W. Yonge,

Mr Speaker,

‘ In the Case now before us, I take it to be of no Consequence, whether or no the Seller can recover either Difference or Damages, and therefore, whether or no they be in effect the same is no material Question. I am very well convinced, that no Circumstances can ever lay a Man under the Necessity of selling or buying for Time; no Man can so much as have an Inclination that Way, unless he be endued with something of the Spirit of Gaming, or unless he knows a Secret, by which he thinks he can make an unjust Advantage of the Person he sells to, or purchases from; and therefore, Sir, I look upon the putting a final End to this Practice to be one of the principal Aims of this Bill. I really, Sir, must say, that I have not heard one material Objection offered against this Bill, and as I was one of those appointed to bring it in, I can say, that all possible Care was taken to make the Words as plain, and the Terms as easy, as were consistent with putting an effectual End to the Evils against which the Bill was originally proposed. However, as the Bill is to go to the other House, I do not know but some few Words may be added or altered, in order to obviate

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Sir John Barnard.

obviate, as much as possible, all Objections that have been or may be made to the Bill.

Then Sir John Barnard spoke again,

Sir,

‘ It is very certain that Long Annuities are included in this Bill ; they must not be bought or sold hereafter but according to the Manner prescribed by this Bill : But I am certain this can be no Objection to the passing of it ; for no wise Man, no honest Man, will presume to sell any thing ’till he has made his Title to it as clear as the Nature of the Thing can admit of ; and therefore I think, that no Possessor of a Long Annuity will presume to sell ’till after he has deduced his Title, and made it so clear, that no Difficulty can be made in approving of it, in which Case all such Bargains may be specifically performed within ten Days after the making thereof ; but if any accidental Delay should in the mean Time happen, the Parties may, by mutual Consent, put off the specific Performance for what Time they please ; there is nothing in this Bill that can prevent such a mutual Indulgence.

‘ I did not before take Notice of the Objection made, That this Bill, if it passes, may be the Occasion of the bringing many Suits in Equity against the Possessors of our publick Funds. This, I must say, I am surprized at. What Guard has any Man, as the Law now stands, against Chancery Suits ? May not any Man now bring a Bill in Equity against me, and set forth, that I owe him a large Sum of Money, tho’ I never had any Dealings with the Man in my Life ? Such a Bill may certainly be brought, but I know what would be the Fate of it ; I know it would be dismissed with Costs : This is my Dependence, I know I have never done any Thing that may render me liable to the having of such a Bill brought against me, and therefore I depend on it that no such Bill will ever be brought. And would it not be the same if the Bill now before us should pass ? Is it to be supposed, that any Man would subject himself to the immediate Expence of ten or twelve Pounds, and the Danger of being obliged to pay twenty or thirty more, unless he had very strong Proofs against the Man whom he made Defendant to his Bill ? This, Sir, is really putting Cases almost impossible, in order from thence to raise Objections against a Bill, for the Remedy of what is, by every Gentleman in this House acknowledged to be, a most insufferable Evil.’

Then Mr Glanville stood up again, and said ;

Sir,

‘ I must observe, that the Possessor of a Long Annuity, who has a Mind to sell, may think his Title as clear as the Sun

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Mr Glanville.

at Noon-Day, and yet when he comes to shew it to the Purchaser, he may find several Objections : In such Case it must be laid before the Purchaser's Counsel, he must examine all the Title-Deeds, and a Conveyance must be drawn up and settled by Counsel, both for the Seller and Buyer ; and this will be admitted, I believe, not to be practicable in ten Days, so that I must still be of Opinion, that the Sale of such publick Securities will, by this Bill, be made very dangerous and difficult, if not altogether impossible.

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' As to Bills in Equity it is certain, that no Man will ever file such a Bill unless he expects some Discovery by the Defendant's Answer. As the Law now stands, no Man can expect any Discovery from a Man with whom he never had any Transactions : But by the Bill now before us, every Man will have some Encouragement to expect a Discovery of something he may make an Advantage of by the Defendant's Answer, if such Defendant ever was a Dealer in any of our Publick Funds ; because, if he ever made a Contract contrary to the Terms of this Bill, he will be obliged to discover it by his Answer, and tho' he may be thereby discharged from the Penalty, yet the other Party contracting with him is not ; so that the Person who files the Bill, may thereby make an Advantage, either by recovering the Money received by the Defendant upon an unlawful Contract, or by grounding an Information upon that Answer for recovering a Penalty from the other Party concerned in such unlawful Contract or Composition ; and therefore, I think, it is evident, that if this Bill passes, the Proprietors of the Publick Funds will be more liable to have Bills in Equity preferred against them than any other Persons in the Kingdom are.

' I shall conclude, Sir, with taking Notice of one Case where People are often obliged to sell before they can be ready to deliver, and that is in the Case of Executors and Trustees, where the Trust-Stock must generally be sold by a Bill in Chancery. In such Cases, according to the Practice now observed, they must sell before they bring their Bill, because the Purchaser is always made a Party to the Suit ; and every Man knows that a Chancery Suit cannot be begun and ended, and the Bargain specifically performed in ten Days Time.'

Mr Bootle spoke next :

Mr Bootle.

Sir,

' I rise up only to rectify some Mistakes that I find Gentlemen seem to be in, with respect to the present Practice of the Law. According to the present Practice, no Man that sells Stock is obliged to keep his Stock for any Time after the Day, on which he contracted to deliver it : If the Buyer

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do not come on that Day to accept the Stock, and pay the Price he agreed to give for it, the Seller makes Publication at the Books for him to come and accept, and pay for the Stock which he is then ready to deliver according to his Contract : Then an actual Transfer is made upon the Books, and that Transfer stands 'till the shutting up of the Books for that Day ; if, in that Time, the Buyer do not come to accept of, and pay for the Stock so transferred, the Transfer is then cancelled ; and upon next Transfer-Day the Seller may sell his Stock to whomsoever he pleases at the current Price of that Day ; and if he sells it at a Loss, he has an Action upon a Breach of Covenant against the Buyer, upon which Action he always recovers the Difference by way of Damages. The Publication and Transfer, made at the Books upon the Day agreed on and proved duly in Court, is always taken for a specific Performance on the part of the Seller ; and the Buyer has no Title to come, at any Time after that Day, to demand a new specific Performance. This is the present Practice in all such Cases, and I am sure there is nothing in the Bill now before us which can alter the present Practice in that Respect ; and therefore I must conclude, that as to this Case, no Stockholder can be brought under any Difficulty or Hardship by the Bill now before us.

‘ With respect, Sir, to the Long Annuities, why may not they be sold as Land-Estates generally are ? In the Sale of Land-Estates, when the Seller finds out one who is willing to be the Purchaser, the first Thing he does is to satisfy him about the Title, before they so much as talk about the Price, or examine particularly into the Value of the Estate to be sold. If this Method be observed with respect to the Sale of Long Annuities, it cannot be said, but that the Agreement may be specifically performed by both Parties, within ten Days after making the same.

‘ As to the Sale of Stock vested in Executors or Trustees, there is no Necessity of selling it before the Bill in Chancery be filed ; there is no Necessity of selling it before a Decree passes for that Purpose : It may be suggested in the Bill, that such a Man is willing to become a Purchaser, and he may be made a Party to the Suit, as well as if he had actually become a Purchaser ; the Effect would be the same, and he would get his Costs in the one Case as well as in the other.

‘ And as to Stockholders being exposed to the Danger of having Bills in Chancery filed frequently against them, there is nothing in it ; no fair Dealer in Stocks can ever be exposed to such a Danger, for whoever files such a Bill must set forth the unlawful Contract particularly ; we are not to imagine, that, from any Clause in this Bill, a Man will be allowed

lowed to bring a Bill in Equity, and suggest generally that the Defendant has made some unlawful Contracts in Stocks, and pray that he may be obliged to discover all his Dealings; no, the Plaintiff must certainly set forth the particular Contract of which he prays a Discovery; and this he cannot do, unless there has not only been some such unlawful Contract, but such an unlawful Contract as he has had some Information of; and if upon the Issue of the Cause his Information appears to be groundless, he may expect to be made pay all Costs of Suit; so that no Man can have Reason to be afraid of any such Bills being filed against him, unless he has actually made some unlawful Contract; and that no such Man should rest in Security is the very Design of this Bill.

'In short, Sir, from all the Objections that have been started, and all the Cases that have been put, I can see nothing but pretended or imaginary Difficulties; and as the Bill now before us will, in my Opinion, put an End to many real Evils, which are of the most dangerous Consequence both to the Trade and Credit of this Nation, therefore I shall with all my Heart be for its passing in this House, and I hope it will be passed into a Law.'

Then the Question being put, That the Bill do pass, it was carried in the Affirmative by 55 against 49; and was sent up to the Lords, who made so many Alterations therein, that it was afterwards drop'd.

May 4. The House being in a Grand Committee to consider of Methods for Relief of the Sufferers by the Charitable Corporation, the Lord Tyrconnel mov'd, That a Sum not exceeding one Million be raised, by way of Lottery, for that Purpose. His Lordship was oppos'd by Mr Sandys; who was answer'd by Sir William Yonge. Hereupon Mr Erle stood up and said,

Sir,

'I am very much for giving all the Relief we can to such as are Objects of Charity, but I am as much against doing it by way of Lottery; for by such a Method, in order to relieve those who have been cheated and undone, we shall give a Handle, by which a much greater Number of weak and simple Persons may be undone.'

Mr Palmer spoke next:

Sir,

'I always was, and always shall be against Lotteries, of whatever Kind, or on whatever Occasion, and therefore I cannot but be against the Proposition now made to us. I shall be glad to see those poor, unhappy People relieved, and I hope that some effectual Methods may be fallen on for procuring that Relief; but do not let us think of giving them Relief by sitting up what has been always decreed

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The Bill against Stockjobbing pass'd the Commons: But is afterwards drop'd, on account of the Alterations made therein by the Lords.

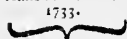
Ld. Tyrconnel moves for a Lottery of 100000 £ for Relief of the Sufferers by the Charitable Corporation.

Deb't thereon, Mr Sandys, Sir W. Yonge, Mr Erle.

Mr Palmer.

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ed a publick Nufance ; I believe it will be a better Way for us to grant a Sum of Money to the Crown, for the Relief of those of the Sufferers who are really Objects of Compassion : This Method I mention only to the Committee ; but, whatever Relief is to be granted, I think it ought to be very much confined, for as to all those who shall appear to have been Gamesters in that Stock, they no more merit the Compassion of the Publick, than those who are undone at a Gaming-Table. I doubt much if any of the Men who became Adventurers in that Corporation deserve much Compassion ; I am afraid, that most of them purchased, either with a View of making an unjust Profit by the advanced Price of the Shares they bought, or with a View to have a higher Interest for their Money, than what they were by Law intitled to, and in either Case they are almost as fraudulent as those who were the Managers ; for he that cheats, or extorts from a Man a Shilling, is as much guilty of Fraud, as he that cheats him out of 1000 l. Indeed, as to the Ladies, a great many of them may have been innocently drawn in by those, to whom they intrusted the Management of their Affairs, or by those who, from the Beginning, had a formed Design of cheating them out of their Money : Their Case is really to be pitied, but in my Opinion, of all the Sufferers, they only are the proper Objects of Compassion, and therefore I hope, that whatever Relief is to be given, will be confined to the fair Sex only.'

Lord Tyrconnel.

To this Lord Tyrconnel replied,

Sir,

' I have as great a Regard for the fair Sex as the Gentleman who spoke last, and with him I think, that they are really the greatest Objects of Compassion ; but, Sir, let us consider, that many of those Gentlemen, who have been undone, have Wives and Daughters ; and I cannot but look upon the Wives and Daughters of such Men to be at least as great Objects of Compassion, as any of those Ladies who have been undone by their own Act and Deed.'

Sir Charles Wager.

Hereupon Sir Charles Wager said,

Sir,

' I must think, that the only Means we can think of for relieving the unhappy Sufferers in that Corporation, is to make a Lottery for their Benefit ; but I must likewise be of Opinion, that a Lottery of a Million will be too large ; I believe one of 500,000 l. may be sufficient ; and therefore I shall second the Motion to the Amount of that Sum.'

Sir Joseph Jekyll.

Then Sir Joseph Jekyll spoke against the Motion as follows :

Sir,

' Before we think of granting any Money to the Crown, or
of

of granting Money in any other Way, for the Relief of those Sufferers, we ought first to consider, whether or no we have any Power or Authority to tax the People, or to grant away the publick Money for the Relief of any private Persons. I must really be of Opinion, that we have no such Power; we are indeed to dispose of the publick Money, but then we are to dispose of it for publick Uses; we are not to convert it either to our own Use, or to the Use of any private Person: 'Tis true, we have sometimes granted Money to the King for the rewarding of private Persons, but such Grants have always been made for some Services rendered by those Persons to the Publick; and therefore, what Money was in that way granted, was really for the Use of the Publick. Even the raising of Money by a Lottery is raising Money upon the People, and if any Part of the Money so raised is granted away to private Persons, I must look upon it to be a converting the publick Money to the Use of private Persons, which I think we have no Power to do; and upon that Account, as well as on account of the many Inconveniences that attend Lotteries, I must be against the Motion.'

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Mr Winnington spoke next in behalf of the Motion :

Mr Winnington.

Sir,

' I have always had a great Regard for the Opinion of the honourable and learned Gentleman who spoke last, but I hope he will excuse me, if I say that I do not think the Objections he has now made against the Proposition in Hand, are near so strong as those usually made by him. As to our Power of granting Money for the Relief in Question, I do not know what Power we may have in that Respect; but I am sure there are several Instances, where we have granted even a publick Tax for the Relief of private Persons. One such Instance, Sir, is within my Knowledge, and is so late, that every Gentleman in this House may remember it; that is, the Case of the Suitors in Chancery, whose Money had been lost by the Misconduct of the late Lord Chancellor, and the then Masters in Chancery: It is well known that this House laid a Tax upon the Law, which I take to be a Tax upon the People, because the whole is paid by the Clients in that Court, and not by the Lawyers; and the Money to arise by this Tax was appropriated towards making good the Loss, which the Suitors in that Court had sustained. Another Instance of the same Nature is that Tax, which was granted for Relief of the Orphans within the City of London; and I believe several other Instances could be given, if we were to examine the Journals of this House.

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‘ However, Sir, I do not take this to be the Question now before us. It is not propos’d to impose any Tax, or to grant any Money to the Crown for the Relief of those unhappy Sufferers ; for I cannot imagine how it can be thought, that the granting a Lottery is either a Tax or an Imposition upon the Publick. By granting a Lottery we do not oblige any Man to pay towards it, no Man is to be forc’d to become an Adventurer ; it is not really so much a Grant of Money, as it is a Repeal in so far of an Act of Parliament lately made against private Lotteries ; for, if it were not for that Statute, the Charitable Corporation could of themselves set up such a Lottery as is now propos’d : And as the making of that Law was occasioned by the many Frauds that were committed by the means of private Lotteries, and the downright Bites that were often put upon People under that Name, the Cause entirely ceases with respect to the Lottery now propos’d, from which no Fraud or Bite can be so much as suspected.’

Sir William Wyndham.

After him Sir William Wyndham stood up, and said,
Sir,

‘ As to the Affair before us, I am afraid we are beginning at the wrong End. We are now in a Committee, to consider of Ways and Means for relieving such of the Sufferers in the Charitable Corporation, as shall be deemed Objects of Compassion, and we are now going to resolve upon a certain Sum to be appropriated for that Relief, before we know any Thing about the Sufferers ; whether there be any, or how many of them there be Objects of Compassion ; or what Sum will be necessary for giving them a proper Relief ? All these Questions ought, I think, to be resolv’d, before we proceed to grant any Sum for that Purpose, either by way of Lottery or any other way. I am, Sir, firmly of Opinion, that we have no Power to lay on any publick Imposition for the Relief of private Persons ; and to think of giving a Relief by way of Lottery, is to establish by Law a new Deceit, for the Relief of those who have suffered by an old one. As to our having it in our Power to relieve private Persons by publick Taxes, the Instances mentioned by the honourable Gentleman who spoke last, are not at all to the present Case. The Suitors in Chancery were in a very different Situation from those we are now about to relieve : The Court of Chancery is one of the publick Courts of the Kingdom, and consequently is the same with the Publick ; whatever Money was put into the Custody of that Court, was put into the Custody of the Publick, and if any of it was purloined by those Officers who are appointed by the Publick, there is no Question but that the Publick is obliged to make it good : Besides, those who had their Money in that Court did

did not voluntarily put it there ; they were all obliged, contrary to their Inclination, to leave it in that Court ; they could not get it out again without an Order of Court for that Purpose ; they could not so much as inquire in what Manner their Money was disposed of ; whereas, with respect to the Sufferers in the Charitable Corporation, they have no Pretence of having trusted the Publick with their Money ; they voluntarily put their Money there ; they might have taken it out when they would, and they might have every Day inquired into the Management of it ; so that what they have lost is entirely owing to their own Act and Deed, or at least to their own Neglect ; they have nothing but Compassion to plead for granting them any Relief from the Publick, and I am afraid, if we consider the Publick aright, and the Loads it already labours under, we must conclude it is not in a proper Condition for granting such large Charities. That other Instance, Sir, relating to the Tax for relieving the Orphans of the City of London, is still less to the present Case ; it is a local Tax ; it extends no farther than the City of London ; and it was most reasonable that the Citizens of London should be obliged to make good the Loss, that was sustained by Persons who were under a Necessity of trusting their Money to them, or at least to the Officers appointed by them.

‘ Now as to Lotteries, Sir, the honourable Gentleman mistakes it, if he imagines that the Frauds committed in private Lotteries, was the only Reason for prohibiting by an express Law the setting up of any such. Every Lottery, publick or private, is a publick Nuisance, because it makes a great many poor unthinking People ruin themselves by venturing more Money in that Way than their Circumstances can admit of ; and, as all Lotteries are a Sort of Gaming-Tables, they give great Encouragement to Idleness and Extravagance, by buoying up weak People with the Hopes of getting Riches in another Way than that of Industry and Frugality, which is the only Way of getting Riches that ought to be encouraged by a wise People ; therefore, Sir, the Cause of the Law does not cease with respect to the Lottery now proposed, but will, I believe, grow more strong against it than against any publick Lottery that ever was proposed ; for, considering the Expences of Management, it is certain that the Corporation, or the Sufferers therein, can make little or nothing by a Lottery, unless it be made so disadvantageous to the Adventurers, that no Man but a Mad-man will put any Money into it ; and if such a Lottery should fall, it would be a very powerful Argument against this and every such Lottery that can be proposed ; for it is really granting a Licence by Act of Parliament to cheat People

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People out of their Money, which is a Sort of Project for raising Money that this House will never, I hope, agree to in any Case whatever.'

Lord Hervey.

Lord Hervey spoke next in Favour of the Motion :

Sir,

' There is, in my Opinion, no possible Relief to be given to those unfortunate People, but what must be attended with some Inconveniencies. I am, in general, as much against encouraging Lotteries as any Gentleman in this House ; but where no real Fraud is committed, I cannot think that a Lottery is a Thing of so bad Consequence ; where the Money thereby raised is duly applied, and no underhand Dealings allowed to be put in Practice, which, to be sure, will be taken Care of in the present Case, it cannot be attended with many Inconveniencies ; and as a Lottery is the only Method which I have yet heard mentioned, or can think of, for giving Relief to those Objects of Compassion we have now under our Consideration ; I have so much Pity for them, that I think the few Inconveniencies, that can attend such a small Lottery as that of 500,000 l. ought in the present Case to be overlooked.

' Upon the Petition of the Proprietors of this Corporation, we have all had two Things under our Consideration. The first was that of doing Justice by punishing the Guilty ; in this we have gone on as we ought to do in all such Cases ; we have proceeded with the utmost Caution ; because, if we had been rigorous in that Point, we might readily have deviated into Severity, which in all Cases ought to be carefully avoided ; but as to the other Point, which is that of giving Relief to the unfortunate Sufferers, and which is the Point now before us, there is no need of so great Caution : If in this we should go a little too far, it is erring upon the safe Side ; the greatest Fault we can be guilty of, is that of shewing too much Compassion and Pity for those innocent Persons, who have by the Frauds of others become proper Objects of Compassion.

' It cannot, I think, be said, that we are beginning at the wrong End, by voting for a 500,000 l. Lottery, before we know the Number of the Sufferers that are Objects of Compassion, or the Sum that will be wanted for giving them a proper Relief ; because, Sir, we are not now to settle the Scheme of the Lottery : Before that is settled, there will be Time to inquire into what Sum will be necessary for giving such Relief, and according as that Sum is large or small, the Lottery may be made the more or the less advantageous for the Adventurers ; If 100,000 l. should be found to be necessary for relieving all those of the Sufferers, who are really Objects of Compassion, there must be a fifth Part of the Money contri-

contributed by the Adventurers sunk for the Use of the Sufferers; and, if it should be found, that half that Sum will be sufficient for the End proposed, then it will not be necessary to sink above one tenth of the Money contributed by the Adventurers; and whatever is thus sunk by the Adventurers, is not really to be looked on as Money thrown away, it is to be looked on as so much Money given by them for a charitable Use; and the raising of this Charity by way of Lottery, is proposed only as an Inducement for some People to contribute towards a charitable Use, who would not perhaps otherwise contribute to the most charitable Use that can be imagined.

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Then Sir Joseph Jekyll spoke again :

Sir Joseph Jekyll,

Sir,

‘ I am very much convinced, and I find it is generally allowed, that a Lottery is in itself a bad Thing; and, I think it is likewise allowed, that there is no Reason for our coming into such a Measure at present, but only the Necessity we are under, and because no other Means of Relief can be thought of. There is no Sort of Lottery can be set up, but what must expose Multitudes of People to be undone; and it is impossible to prevent several of those fraudulent Practices, which are always set up under the Sanction of every Publick Lottery. If then a Lottery be in itself a bad Thing, surely the less we have of it the better; why should we vote for a Lottery of 500,000*l.* if one of 250,000*l.* will do the Business? This Consideration alone makes it, Sir, in my Opinion, necessary first to consider who are Objects of Compassion, and what Sum will be sufficient to relieve them; for if upon such Inquiry it be found that a Lottery of 250,000*l.* will be sufficient for the End proposed, it would certainly be very wrong in us to vote a Lottery of 500,000*l.* for we seem all to be convinced, that a Lottery for any Sum will do Mischief; but a Lottery for a small Sum can never do so much Mischief as one for a larger.’

Mr Heathcote spoke next as follows:

Mr Heathcote,

Sir,

‘ I must confess that what is now proposed seems to be a new Method of raising Charity; but I hope the charitable Disposition of the People of this Nation is not as yet so much decayed, as to make it necessary to trick them into the giving of Charity; when they are fully convinced that the Use, for which the Money is raised, is really charitable, in such Cases I have never as yet observed the People backward in their Contributions; I am, indeed, afraid that the Objects of Charity now under our Consideration would not meet with any great Relief from the People; for the Generality of the People do generally think, that those who
are

Anno 6. Geo. II
1733.

are undone by any sort of Gaming or Stockjobbing, are not proper Objects of Charity. Those who are ruined by Shipwrecks, by Fire, or such Accidents, are certainly much greater Objects of Charity, and more intitled to a Parliamentary Relief, than those who ever were or ever can be undone by the Management of any Publick Stock whatever; because every Proprietor may look into the Affairs of the Company, and may prevent the Mismanagement, if he is but tolerably careful of his own Interest; and yet we have never seen any of the former so much as claim a Relief from Parliament.

‘I must observe, Sir, that what we are now about may come to be a very bad Precedent; it will for the future make all Proprietors of Publick Funds less careful of their Directors and Managers; so that I am afraid, we may have many Applications of the same Nature. There is now a Company under our Consideration, which will likewise, I believe, stand in need of the same sort of Relief; and I do not know, but that in nine or ten Years, another great Company may find themselves under a Necessity of applying for something of the same Nature; especially if they should go on with their present Scheme of diminishing so considerably their Trading Capital, and loading it with all the Debts they now owe. For these Reasons, Sir, as well as a great many others, I cannot but be against the Motion now in hand.’

This Debate being over, a Motion was made, That the Chairman leave the Chair: But the Question being put thereupon, it was carried in the Negative by 85 to 51; after which the Committee came to several Resolutions, which upon the Report were agreed to; and a Bill brought in for the Relief of the Sufferers by a Lottery of 500,000*l.* which passed into a Law.

June 11. The King came to the House of Lords, and the Commons attending, his Majesty made the following Speech to both Houses.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

“**T**HE Season of the Year, and the Dispatch you have given to the Publick Business, make it proper for me to put an End to this Session of Parliament.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

“I return you my Thanks for the Provisions you have made for the Service of the current Year. I have never demanded any Supplies of my People, but what were absolutely necessary for the Honour, Safety and Defence of me and my Kingdom; and I am always well pleased, when the Publick Expenses are supply’d in a Manner least burdensome to my Subject.

A Lottery of 500,000*l.* voted for Relief of the Sufferers by the Charitable Corporation.

King's Speech at putting an End to the sixth Session.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

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1733.

“ I cannot pass by unobserved, the wicked Endeavours,
 “ that have lately been made Use of to inflame the Minds
 “ of the People, and by the most unjust Misrepresentations,
 “ to raise Tumults and Disorders, that almost threatned the
 “ Peace of the Kingdom ; but I depend upon the Force of
 “ Truth, to remove the groundless Jealousies, that have
 “ been raised, of Designs carrying on against the Liberties
 “ of my People, and upon your known Fidelity, to defeat
 “ and frustrate the Expectations of such as delight in Con-
 “ fusion. It is my Inclination, and has always been my
 “ Study, to preserve the Religious and Civil Rights of all
 “ my Subjects.

“ Let it be your Care to undeceive the Deluded, and to
 “ make them sensible of their present Happiness, and the
 “ Hazard they run of being unwarily drawn, by specious
 “ Pretences, into their own Destruction.”

After which, the Lord Chancellor, by his Majesty's Com-
 mand, prorogued the Parliament to the 26th of July :
 They were afterwards farther prorogued to the 17th of Ja-
 nuary.

The Parliament
 prorogued.

The End of the SECOND VOLUME,







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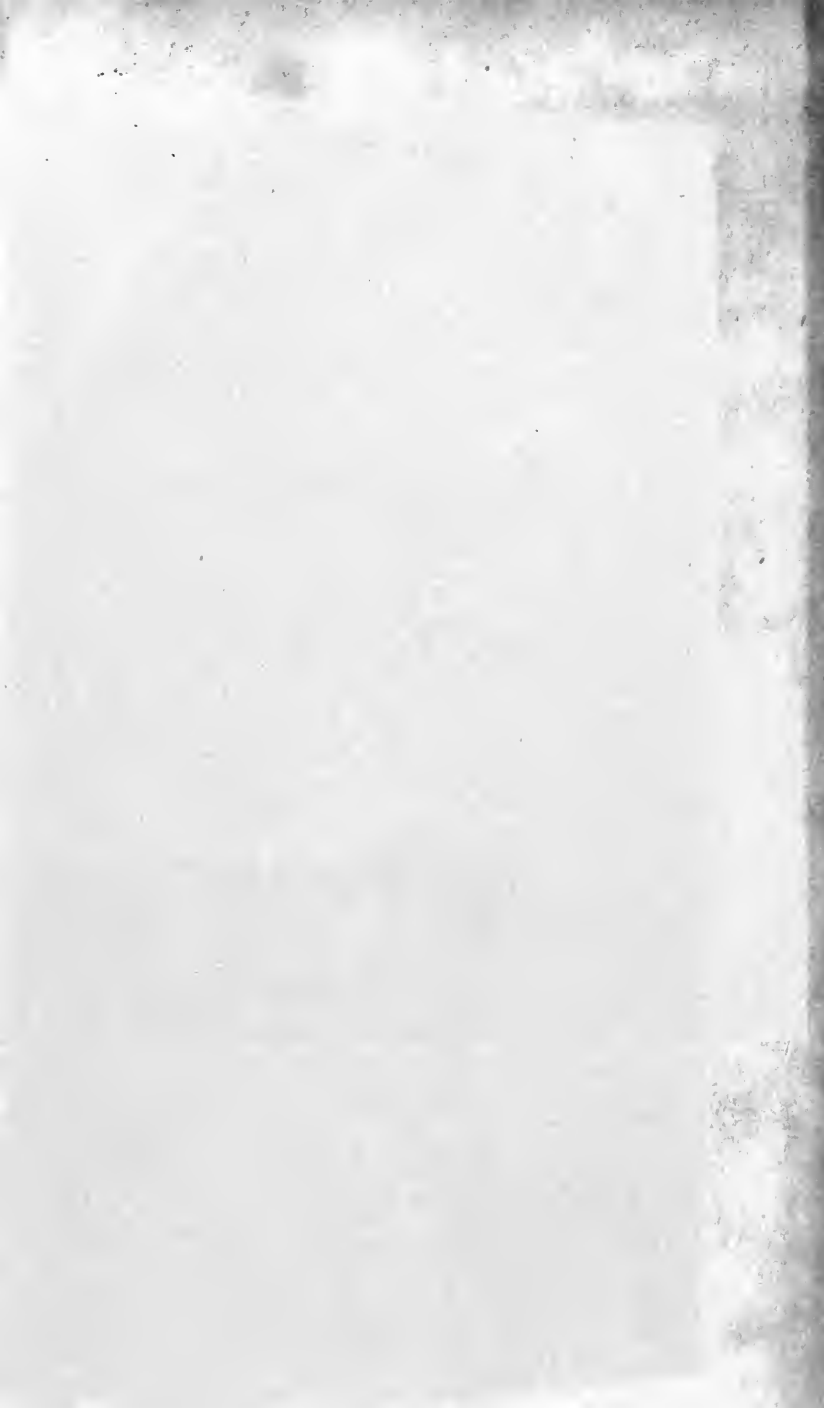
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